FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING

FRIENDSHIP'S
OFFERING.
London.
MDCCCXXXVIII

Drawn by A.E. Chalon, R.A. Engraved by F. Bacon.

The Hon.ble the Misses Beauclerk.

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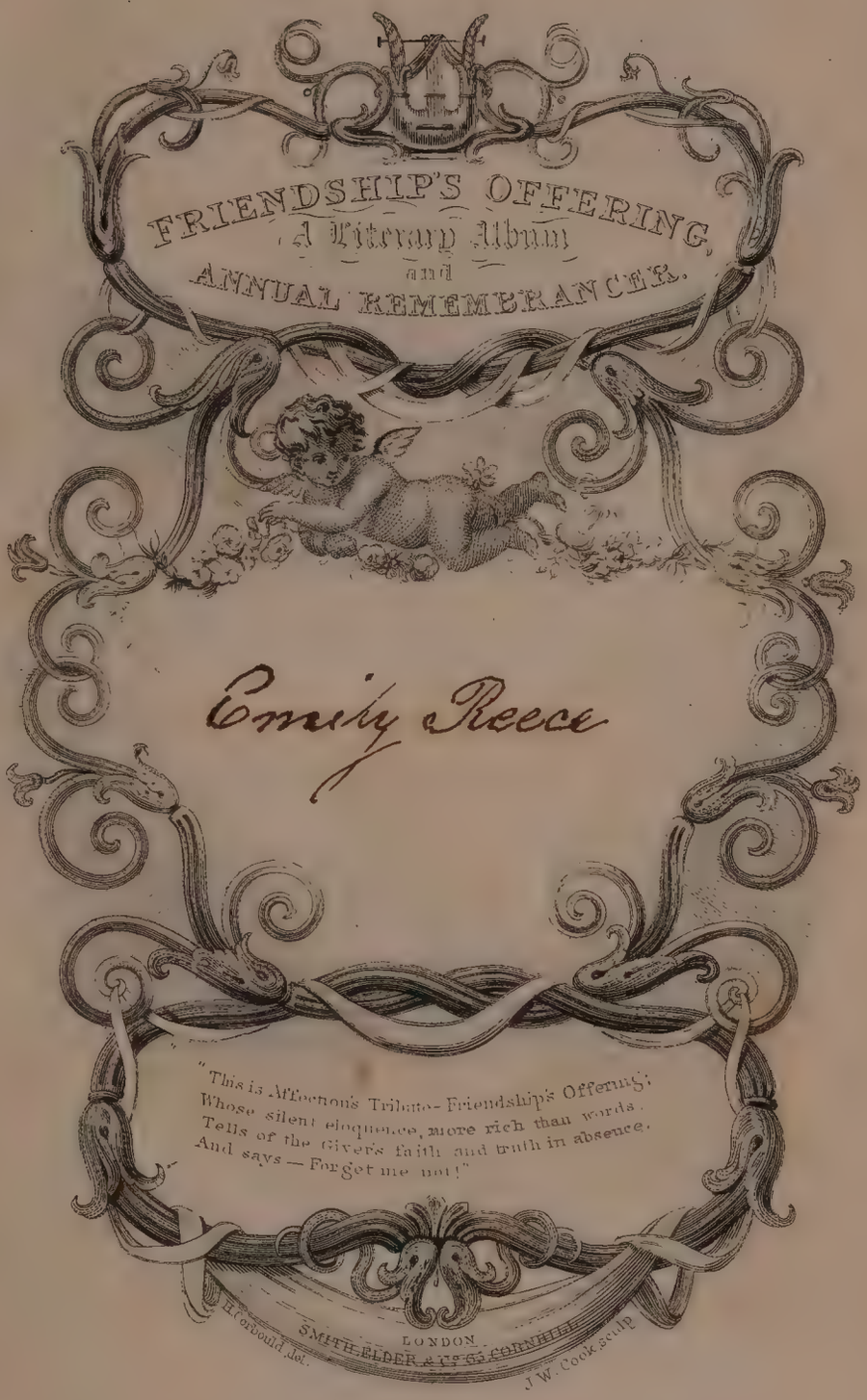
FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.
A Literary Album
and
ANNUAL REMEMBRANCER.
Emily Reece
"This is Affection's Tribute—Friendship's Offering;
Whose silent eloquence, more rich than words,
Tells of the Giver's faith and truth in absence,
And says—Forget me not!"
H. Corbould del.
LONDON.
SMITH ELDER & Co. 65 CORNHILL
J.W. Cook Sculp

FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING;

AND

Winter's Wreath:

A CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S PRESENT,

FOR

MDCCCXXXVIII.

" This is Affection's Tribute, Friendship's Offering,
Whose silent eloquence, more rich than words,
Tells of the Giver's faith, and truth in absence,
And says — Forget me not !"

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO., CORNHILL.

1838.

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TO

HER MAJESTY,

ADELAIDE, QUEEN DOWAGER,

This Work

IS, BY PERMISSION,

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

THE past year has been marked by an event which has plunged a loyal people in sorrow, and, in reference to which, a record of the deepest sympathy with the illustrious Bereaved One, especially becomes a work that, for so long a period, has flourished under her gracious patronage. To the tribute of condolence, thus dutifully and respectfully offered, is added the fervent desire, that England may, for many years, enjoy the advantage of the example, afforded by that illustrious lady, of those domestic virtues, which, when adorning "the high places of the earth," have an influence on the morals of a nation, stronger than that of the wisest laws that ever emanated from the sagacity of man.

So efficiently has the Editor been supported by

his Contributors in the formation of this volume, that, although believing it to be the best of the series which he has superintended, he can claim, for himself, little merit beyond that of having zealously and honestly administered his trust, uninfluenced by the *prestige* of a high name on the one hand, and by the pleadings of his personal partialities on the other. Not inconsistent, however, with the principle thus avowed is his pride at numbering so many distinguished writers in his ranks, or his gratitude for the manner in which they have sustained their reputation in his pages.

It has been the good fortune of "FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING," in more than one instance, to bring into notice talents which were comparatively, if not wholly unknown to the world. On the present occasion, the Editor has the gratification of introducing, in the character of a poet, MR. CORNELIUS WEBBE, whose "*Glances at Life*" have already established for him no mean reputation as a prose writer.

With reference to the pictorial department of the volume, it is hoped that the anxiety of the

Proprietors to merit increased patronage will be manifest both in the subjects, and the execution of the illustrations.

*** The Editor takes this occasion to state that he holds it to be a point, not merely of courtesy, but of duty, to return, with the least possible delay, the MSS. of the obliging offer of which he is unable to avail himself; and that authors, who do not favour him with their address, will find their productions at the publishers', in sealed envelopes, each superscribed with the writer's name or initial, or,—when neither is given,—with the title of the article.

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THE GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER.

BY LEITCH RITCHIE.

> And then I dived,
> In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
> Searching its cause in its effect; and drew,
> From withered bones, and skulls, and heaped up dust,
> Conclusions most forbidden.
>
> MANFRED.

I DO not know whether I am correct in supposing, that the following tradition possesses the rare quality of originality. I met with it in a lonely and savage district of the Black Forest; and the superstition it described—if superstition it be—differs, in a very peculiar manner, from the general character of popular belief in Germany. A friend, well read in such studies, pronounces it to be modern; but, with all due respect for his learning and genius, I am myself inclined to refer its origin to the age, when men, bewildered rather than illumined by the morning twilight of science, fell headlong into the mysteries of what was called occult philosophy. This seems to be the period

to which the story itself applies, and its localities are the ruins of one of the fortress-dwellings of the middle ages. The scene, not very distant from the sources of the Danube, possesses much savage grandeur; and the wilderness of trees around, in which the monuments of feudal pride are buried, add greatly to the idea of loneliness and desolation. On such a spot—with the leaves of autumn whirling round my head, the slant rays of the sun touching only the broken turrets of the keep, and the October wind moaning, like a human voice, in the forest, I confess I felt no inclination to criticise the story of the Great-great-grandfather.

The family of Ardenstein, whose fortunes are the subject of the tradition, does not appear to have ever ranked high among the noble houses of what is now the Grand Duchy of Baden. The lord Conrad, indeed, to whom the history more particularly refers, is mentioned by the chroniclers of the fifteenth century; but this is only incidentally, and in a slight and cursory manner. It allows us to perceive, notwithstanding, that, in his youth, he followed the profession of arms, and was attached to the fortunes of the Emperor Albert II., of the house of Hapsburgh. What disgust he may have received at the German court, when, as yet, its princes were only puppets set up by the great barons, cannot now be ascertained; but, in fact, the state of society was such, not only then, but for half a century after, that a man who had anything to lose found the battlements of his own castle the best

post he could occupy. It would be more curious to trace the origin of his predilection for the occult studies of the time. This, however, is impossible; and we meet with the unaccountable spectacle of a German baron, shut up in his ancestral abode, immersed in the wildest dreams of a daring, and, as some suppose, impious philosophy, at a time when the Germanic body seemed to be rending into pieces, like the planks of an ill-constructed vessel in a storm.

Conrad, however, had travelled, and had seen the world, at least to a certain extent; he had conversed familiarly with men of all creeds, and of all sorts of knowledge; and, in the solitude of Ardenstein, a naturally inquisitive and speculative mind, shut out from the usual objects of human interest, began speedily to attach itself to the most subtle and extravagant inquiries. These, however, although seemingly fantastic in the highest degree, had always in view a definitive and worldly end. Money—money was the grand object. Baffled in his career of ambition, shut out from the lists of honour, poverty had ever been his arch-enemy. He had retired from the world at an age when the schemes of human policy are at their ripest, not because he wanted either skill or courage, but because he was *poor*. This was the idea always uppermost in his mind; and when accident, or study seemed to open out to him a path towards the deep-hidden secrets of nature, the treasure beyond, when his imagination lifted the veil, was always in the form of gold.

Chemistry, at this period, was not so much a science as a mystery; and the curious affinities of natural substances were looked upon, when discovered, with a superstitious awe. Philosophy was, therefore, wandering towards its results in the dark; and if anything great was actually achieved, it must have been owing principally to fortuitous circumstances. All Europe, however, began to be athirst for knowledge. In this century a new world was discovered, and the limits of the old extended; the "stormy spirit of the Cape" was defied; printing was invented; geographical maps were secured from the dangerous errors of copyists by being engraved on wood; pictures were painted in oil-colours; the rude germs of the drama were fostered by legal enactments; the first editions of the Greek poets appeared:—in every department of human knowledge there seemed to be abroad a spirit of eager and restless inquiry. At the university of Paris alone there were probably not fewer than fifty thousand students,* devoted to the various branches of literature and science; and it is not surprising if the collision which took place, in the stirrings and strugglings of this vast mass of intellect, struck forth occasionally a spark either to enlighten or bewilder.

Conrad, however, as the tradition bears, was not so much indebted to contemporary science, as to the

* Ten thousand graduates voted at a question agitated in the university. The datum from which I calculate the number of students is the fact, stated by historians, that, in the reign of Charles VIII., there were five thousand graduates and twenty-five thousand students.

recorded wisdom of the Arabians. Among the family archives, there had lain, for at least two centuries, several precious manuscripts, which were now drawn eagerly, yet reverentially, into the light of day. These were inscribed, neither upon the cheap Egyptian papyrus, nor upon the perishing paper of the moderns, but on the more costly parchment—which frequently served for two books, one written over the obliterated traces of the other. It is extraordinary, in fact, that such valuables should have remained so long in the possession of so poor a house. Not very long before, two hundred sheep, and a large quantity of grain, were not thought a very extravagant price for a copy of the Homilies of the Bishop of Halberstadt; and the fact is known to every reader of French history, that Louis XI. (the contemporary of Conrad), when he wished to borrow the works of Rasis, the Arabian physician, from the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, was obliged not only to deposit in pledge a good deal of plate, but to get a nobleman to join him in a bond of security to a large amount.

The manuscripts of Conrad, related in a direct manner, to his own studies; and it is said that some discoveries which they described bore such intimate connection with certain points ascertained by, or at least known to, the new inquirer, that the one portion of knowledge was useless without the other. It is in this manner that the tradition accounts for the gigantic step which its hero was enabled to make, during a

single life-time, in the mysteries of the occult philosophy.

The two great *arcana* of the age—commonly treated as the superstitions of infant science—it is well known, were the Philosophers' Stone and the Elixir Vitæ; the former a composition possessing the property of transmuting the baser metals into gold, and the latter a beverage which could prolong the duration of human life to an indefinite period. The art of making gold, even if attainable at all, was unworthy of the labours of philosophy, for it never could benefit the human race. If gold were to become as plentiful as iron, the only effect would be, that, in commerce, men would be forced to adopt some rarer substance as the conventional representative of property. Gold would then sink to its intrinsic value, which is much lower than that of iron.

The elixir of *immortality*—whatever extent of time this word may comprehend among finite beings—afforded a nobler, and, it may be added, a more feasible pursuit. It was a universal medicine, both curative and preservative (from which the nostrums of the ignorant quacks of our own day are descended), and to believe in its existence only required a belief in the extension of certain powers already cognisable in nature. We know that, after death, the body, by means of artificial compositions, may be preserved unchanged for many ages.

Before the flood men lived between nine and ten

hundred years, and the climate of the new world could not have much deteriorated, since Shem breathed in its atmosphere five hundred and two years. The son of Shem reached the age of four hundred and thirty-eight, his grandson that of four hundred and thirty-three, and his great-grandson that of four hundred and sixty-four. In these three generations we see no evidence of an appointed dwindling in the age of man. On the contrary, it was expressly declared, at the cessation of the deluge, "I will not again curse the ground any more." And why? Because "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." The curse was left to be inflicted upon man by man himself; and war—passion—luxury—sprung gradually up as its deadly agents.

Neither Conrad, nor the other philosophers of the age, conceived it to be impious to endeavour to redeem their lives from this ancestral curse. On the contrary, prayer and religious purifications were reckoned essential to their advancement in occult science. The table for their operations was usually raised like an altar, covered with a white linen cloth, and set towards the east; and the garments of the operator himself resembled, as nearly as possible, the surplice and cope of a priest. On this table were seen various natural substances, such as red sanders, aloes, mastic, pepper, saffron, sulphur, peppermint, pieces of wax and metals, blood, bones, oil, milk, and honey; but the names of the more secret ingredients were not even

committed to paper, "sed spiritu spiritui paucis sacrisque verbis infunduntur."*

However acceptable the piety of Conrad might have been to Heaven, it was thrown away as regarded men. His operations were looked upon with fear and horror by the whole neighbourhood; the castle of Ardenstein was avoided even by those who had formerly gained their livelihood by ministering to the wants of the inmates; and, at length, its solitary lord was reputed a sorcerer, whose name was already enrolled among those of the infernal angels. In this age all philosophy was mingled with astrology; and the operations of the chemist, the physician, and the surgeon, received a strange and mystic character from their supposed connection with the heavenly influences. It is no wonder, therefore, that Conrad, in his lonely watch-tower, which he had converted into a laboratory—now poring over his books, now flinging, at appointed minutes, unknown substances into the bubbling cauldron, and now looking out into the night like a high-priest of the stars—was associated in the popular fancy with the ideal beings he was supposed to worship or command.

Years went round. The wife of the lord of Ardenstein died, and the castle became still more solitary. The only child of the union, a boy, (born when the father was already advanced in life,) was now growing up to manhood, and in him were concentrated all the worldly cares of the lord Conrad. He watched over

* Cornelius Agrippa.

his health with the most intense solicitude; he forbade riding, hunting, and all manly sports, as dangerous amusements; he prohibited study as a poison which vitiated the springs of life. The young man accordingly grew up into mere animal existence; and this appeared to be all which his wayward father desired. He, at length, reached the age of twenty-one, and was immediately married to a lady, whose family resided at too great a distance from the spot to be aware of the strange stories that were afloat with regard to the house of Ardenstein. From this moment Conrad looked upon his son with indifference: nay, he was even supposed to regard with contempt and aversion the being to whom he had himself denied that intellectual cultivation which commands respect. The very servants of the family observed, with hardly concealed indignation, a conduct so unjust and so unnatural; but Conrad, with the air of a man who had reached some aim and attainment, turned calmly away, and, abstracting his soul from the world, plunged deeper than ever into his mysterious studies.

It was, at length, announced to the recluse that a man-child was born to his son, and that thus (being now himself far down in the decline of life) he might expect to leave the line of the lords of Ardenstein in no danger of speedy interruption. At this news Conrad started from his reverie, and ran to the bedchamber earlier than the father himself—who was now a man of middle age. He looked long and earnestly at the infant, examined it from head to foot, tried its

joints, and felt the bones of its chest; and then gave orders for its treatment, even in the minutest particular. The stern and taciturn old man was accustomed to be obeyed. The son was a mere eating, drinking, and sleeping machine; and his wife, shut up, for half a life-time, in that dreary mansion, had sunk almost into stupidity. The child was educated like its predecessor, which is to say that he received the education of a plant; and he grew up, and thrived exceedingly in all physical attributes and proportions, and became, in his turn, a man, and then a husband.

In the same year Conrad attended the funeral of his son, and the bridal of his grandson. The former of these two, when he died, was an old man, "full of years;" and it was a strange thing to see another old man bearing the pall of the coffin, and calling the white-headed corpse his son. The pace of the lord of Ardenstein was as firm and decided as it had been half a century before; but he was by no means hale-looking. In addition to the wrinkles and attenuation of age, he had still more than is usual of the death-like paleness which, towards the close of a long life, makes the face resemble that of a waxen image. This was the effect of severe study. It seemed as if the dull, white gleam of the midnight lamp still rested on his features, even after he had come out into the light of day.

The occasion, however, on which he now appeared before the people was a solemn, and even an awful one; and all the old associations that are connected,

in common minds, with the idea of death, arose in the imaginations of the spectators. The pace of Conrad, I have said, was firm; and his intellect, in like manner, was collected, and in the strongest tone of manhood. His frame only was impaired. All fullness of outline was lost; his flesh had sunk; his muscles had begun to shrink and wither; and the white bones appeared projecting beneath the white skin. If a corresponding deterioration had been evident in the other parts of his being,—if his limbs had bent under the slender weight they supported,—if his manner had betrayed the imbecility of age—perhaps the people would have been satisfied. Perhaps the once dreaded sorcerer would have been forgotten in the frail old man.

But the case was different. This anatomy of a man seemed filled with a kind of spectral life, which gave something of the unnatural—or rather super-natural—even to the commonest motions of the human machine; and when, at last, relaxing from the cold, sedate sternness of manner which was habitual to him, the lord Conrad strode quickly, yet collectedly, towards the grave, into which the body had just been lowered, all drew back simultaneously, and a general catching of the breath was heard distinctly through the crowd.

He looked down into the pit. He looked long and earnestly; and while he looked, the shadows of memory seemed to darken his brow. Nature, at that moment, appeared to resume her power over a heart long dead to human sympathies; and an expres-

sion of pity, mingled with compunction, flitted slowly across his face. It flitted across those dead, wax-like features like a phantom, strange, awful, and unnatural, and so it vanished. Conrad then raised his head majestically; his frame seemed to expand; his chest rose palpably; and, as he looked round, not at, but *over* the crowd, a gleam of pride and lofty triumph flashed through the films of age which had gathered upon his eye. He turned round, and without a word or look to the assembly, walked rapidly away. It was observed (adds the tradition) that a low, muttering growl of thunder was heard at the moment; the atmosphere darkened; and the rain commenced falling in large and heavy drops. The mourners left the place in silence; and it was some time before they began to talk to each other, in low voices, of the circumstances of the scene.

The grandson was trained like the son. He was trained up for the sole purpose of continuing the line of the house of Ardenstein in all completeness of outward form and proportion. The same peculiarity, however, attended him which was remarkable in the preceding generations of the family. No child was born to him till late in life; and that first and only child was a son.

This son, in his turn, grew like his predecessor, receiving the education of a plant; and waxed, and waned, and withered, and died, leaving behind him a single child, the son of his old age.

When this event took place the lord Conrad was still alive.

I have divested the tradition, in going along, of the superstitious matter which it gathered, of necessity, in the course of its transmission. I have disentangled the line of history from that of romance, and I give the story as a coherent narrative, recited and believed in the localities to which its incidents belong. I might do more. I might produce passages from contemporary authors, which tend strongly to corroborate the principal facts; but to what purpose? In the course of the half-dozen busy years which I have devoted to literature, my studies have been more curious than important. While presenting to the public a succession of frivolous and unremembered books—because it was my pecuniary interest to do so—I have indemnified myself by pursuing a course of researches, equally frivolous perhaps, but more consonant to the natural bent of my mind. These researches can never be turned to any account either of fame or profit. The world will not take the trouble of ransacking the obscure libraries of the Continent, for the purpose of finding, in a nameless book, the corroboration of a useless fact. I say, the lord Conrad was alive.

We must not imagine that this fact, startling and extraordinary as it is to us, excited, in any corresponding degree, the wonder even of the superstitious age of which we treat. The inhabitants of Ardenstein were accustomed to the presence of their mysterious lord before they began to reason at all; he was familiar to

their imagination from infancy to youth, from youth to age; and his idea therefore did not enter into their minds, like an apparition, to shock and bewilder. He was regarded, notwithstanding, with universal awe. If met suddenly in his walks, his vassals either turned and fled, or bent their heads, and cast down their eyes till he had passed by. But this rencounter was a thing of very rare occurrence. Conrad hardly ever left the castle till after night-fall, when a peasant of that age would not have dared, under any exigence, to face the terrors of the forest. He was sometimes seen, however, from the windows gliding like a shadow through the trees; and it is said that articulate voices were heard, in the direction in which the spectral figure disappeared, rising wildly upon the gusts of night.

The child of his great-grandson is said, by the tradition, to have amply realised the expectations of the lord Conrad in every quality of person. As he grew up to boyhood, he seemed to personify the imaginings of the Greek sculptors. So perfect, indeed, was his form, that he was rather admired as some rare extravagance of Nature than as a part of her usual productions. His intellectual faculties, in like manner, approached to a degree of what, among finite beings, may be called perfection. These were not suffered to run to waste, as in the case of his predecessors; but, on the contrary, every possible care was lavished upon his education. Masters were brought, from far and near, according to their reputation, and the lonely woods of Ardenstein echoed one moment to the disputations of

philosophy, and the next to songs that rivalled the natural melody of the grove. It seemed as if it was Conrad's ambition to form a perfect man both in his moral and physical being; and the young Leonard gave ample promise that this splendid vision should be realised.

The youth had never seen the Ancestor face to face, except with the half-conscious eyes of infancy. He could call to mind a strange indistinct form, bending over his couch, dressed in a black mantle which enveloped him like a cloud. The face was like that of a very, very old man; but it possessed he knew not what of the awful and mysterious, which made his young blood curdle. He could remember that often, when he awoke, he was afraid to open his eyes, lest the vision should present itself. Subsequently he was admitted, but not oftener than once a year, into the presence of the lord Conrad. On such occasions, the reception-room was darkened to such a degree, that it was impossible to guess even at its form. A single taper stood on the table, with a flame as small as a diamond spark, yet intense enough almost to blind the visitant, whose face appeared to be the only point it illumined. Seated by the table was a dusky figure which the imagination could hardly mould into the human form, till a hollow voice emitted from a more luminous part of the object, which might be the face, informed him that he was in the presence of his ancestor. These interviews gradually became more rare; and, at length, when Leonard was approaching the com-

pletion of his twenty-first year, the epoch of marriage with the family, he had been three years without seeing, even in that shadowy manner, the individual who, from his birth, had held his fate in his hands.

He was, one evening, returning homeward through the neighbouring forest, walking loiteringly, and meditating, in a kind of quiet discontent, on his peculiar situation. He was now of an age when the quick blood of youth can brook any thing better than the peace even of prosperity. There were wars, and rumours of wars, among the nations, distinctions to aim at, and fortune to win. There was love to look for, — that "unseen seraph" whom we follow even to martyrdom —

"That unreached paradise of our despair,"

which we pursue, with instinctive passion, knowing it to be divine, yet wondering that it should be unattainable by the sons of men! He alone, as it seemed, of all mankind, was without aim or object, without hate to nerve, or love to lead and illumine. With the exception of the preceptors, who, in general, were studious men, plunged in silent abstraction, the inhabitants of the castle resembled people walking in their sleep. His father and mother had not an idea unconnected with the physical necessities of their nature. The domestics were automata, worked by the springs of habit, and obeying the impulse of him who governed them without thought or volition. Leonard groaned in spirit to think that it was *his* destiny to vegetate in

such a soil; and, for the hundredth time, the idea occurred to him of emancipating himself from the gripe of that destiny which had enchained so many generations of his family.

Before he emerged from the labyrinth of the wood, or that of his reflections, the shadows of night had fallen around him, and the wind, which either rises at the close of day, or is more distinctly heard in the silence of the hour, began to whisper among the trees. Leonard felt awed, he knew not why; and, as a tall, dark, indefinite figure stood before him in the gloom, he experienced a sensation resembling the thrill of superstitious terror which had been wont to curdle his blood in boyhood.

"Leonard," said the lord Conrad, for it was he, in a voice so hollow and indistinct, that he could hardly catch the intonations, "the time hath now come when thou must perform thy duty to thy ancestral line by handing it down unbroken to posterity. Thou must marry. Thou wilt find money and instructions in thy chamber,—and what thou hast to do, thou must do quickly." The spectre moved away, as he concluded these words, and he was already nearly lost in the surrounding shadows before the young man recovered from the tremor into which he had been thrown by so unexpected an apparition. In another moment, however, summoning up the natural pride and energy of his character, he bounded after the disappearing figure.

"I have, for some time past," said he, standing still, as he perceived that the lord Conrad turned round to await

him, "I have, for some time past, desired this interview. I am weary of inactivity and solitude, and I wish to exchange them for the shock and struggle of the world. I owe no respect to my ancestral line, the very name of which is unknown in the history of the country; and, if I marry at all, which will depend upon my finding upon earth the incarnation of an idea, it will certainly not be for the purpose of adding another link to the leaden chain of Ardenstein. I will go forth, since you permit me; but it will be to follow out a prouder destiny than that of the three preceding generations of my house." The young man spoke with vehemence, not unmingled with a tone of haughty displeasure, as what he supposed to be the wrongs of his family crowded into his memory. The tall shadow stood motionless for some time after he had done; but, at length, Leonard heard again those hollow, and scarcely definite sounds which were the voice of his ancestor.

"I might have foreseen this," replied the lord Conrad; "but power, without foresight, has ever been my curse! Who would animate a statue, when he can have no control over its actions? I found you a mere breathing machine; and, by my own will, I endowed you with intelligence. In return you would destroy the plans which have taken centuries to mature!"

"What are those plans?" demanded Leonard, eagerly. "If you have endowed me with intelligence, can you expect to govern me like a puppet? Or, having given me to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, are you afraid lest I put forth my hand upon the fruit of

the Tree of Life!" A hoarse, hollow, chuckling sound broke from the lips of the spectre-like figure, which resembled a grotesque and horrible attempt at laughter.

"It is that I would give thee to eat," said he, "thou foolish boy! What is knowledge without length of days? What is power that can be comprehended in a span? Riches are but a mockery, if, after a little time, they melt from our grasp; ambition is but a dream, if it flies in a year; love is but a flower, if it withers in a day. These things thou mayest render permanent if thou wilt, for I will endow thee with the power. It is for that I have lived,—I know not how long. It is for that I have travailed by day and by night. It is for that I have smothered in my bosom the human affections. I would make thee——"

"What?" exclaimed the youth impetuously, for Conrad paused.

"Even as I," added the ancestor.

"And *what* art thou?—a wonder—a dread—a mystery! Where is the profit of your labours? Have you possessed the enjoyments of three generations? Suffer me, at least, to see that countenance, resplendent with the beauty of immortality!"

"Immortality, my son, is not of earth. Here below everything is comparative. The gods of antiquity were merely men raised by power and genius, above their fellows; and the sage whom knowledge has given to drink of the divine Elixir, can, at best, hope to return the springs of life to their original purity, and postpone, for certain generations, the working of the in-

evitable poison they contain—which is death. My term draws to a close, and I would fain live again in thee. Ardenstein must die, but the Ardensteins will live; and my family, separate from the herd of mankind by their high and lonely fate, will be immortal, even in mortality. It is for this I have consented to live so long."

"*Consented?*"

"For this I have laboured — for this I have suffered——"

"And enjoyed?"

"Ay, enjoyed; for is it not joy to triumph? But no more: do as I have bidden, and do quickly; for, although I feel that my remaining term is short, I know not its precise duration. On the eve when yonder crescent moon is at its height, come to me again; and till then, farewell." The dusky figure retreated at the concluding words, and, in another moment, was lost in the shadows of night.

After this interview, it would appear from the tradition, that a strange alteration took place in the young man. It seemed as if he had possessed a hidden fund of that love of mystic research, which perhaps was part of the transmitted character of his house, and which was now, by an accidental circumstance, called into use. His eyes glowed, and his cheeks flushed with a hope not less fervent for being indefinite. He dreamed, not merely of length of days, not merely of prodigious wealth, but of the god-like knowledge which might be obtained by the researches of whole centuries, and of

the dominion over the minds and fortunes of his fellow-men, which might be acquired by exhaustless treasures. Still there had been something in his education, — in the education of the age in which he lived,—capable of preserving, to a certain degree, the equipoise of his mind. The fairy light which now rose upon his vision, did not rise in the midst of darkness. The world, and the world's denizens, had changed since the lord Conrad first drank at the fountain of science: men had learned to look steadily even at the most wonderful secrets of nature; and the explorer of hidden things, instead of plunging blindly into the midst, like a knight errant into an enchanted forest, measured his steps by the laws of induction.

"Of what utility," demanded Leonard, "is this wonderful knowledge to its present possessor? How has this lifetime been passed, the duration of which would have ranked him of old among the deities of the world? In what way has he operated upon the destinies of mankind? What are his sources of enjoyment? Are they altogether different from those of other men? or do they merely exceed them in the scale of intensity? Why does he shroud himself from observation? Are his eyes of immortal lustre too bright to be looked upon? and does he muffle his voice, lest its tones should fascinate the ear too deeply?" Leonard pondered, and pondered, on this text, till a cloud of suspicion settled upon his mind; and he determined, come what might, before embarking in the unknown career, which seemed to be chalked out for him by the

lord Conrad, to see him face to face, and to hear the answer to his inquiries from his own lips.

In the meantime, the wishes of the Ancestor appear to have been fulfilled as usual; for the tradition, without going into any previous particulars, notices, in a cursory manner, the appearance of a young wife at the castle. The probability is, that a revolution had taken place in Leonard's whole mind. The "strong necessity of loving," so much vaunted by the poets and novelists, had given way before a more powerful agent; and he had married, just as men usually do, without expecting to find in his choice any thing more than—a spouse. It sometimes happens, however, that what appears at first a common character, turns out, on closer acquaintance, to be the very reverse; and, in the present instance, the young pair, who had glided into the bonds of Hymen, with hardly more knowledge of each other than is requisite to authorize a partnership in a dance, discovered speedily those mutual affinities of mind which are indispensable in a lasting attachment. Their intimacy, however, was of too short standing for unreserved confidence; and Leonard was, at first, only anxious to preserve his mysterious secret from his bride. "I cannot tell as yet," said he, "the strength of her mind; let me not chill her buoyant blood at the very outset, and make her find herself transported, all on a sudden, from the living world into an enchanted castle, a region of sleep and nightmare dreams. When the fateful interview I expect, and seek for, is past, it will be time enough to

let her know my singular position, and share it with her."

The lady, in the meantime, looked upon her new abode and its inhabitants, first with curiosity, and then with amazement. Every thing wore such a dreamy aspect that she might have imagined the whole to be an illusion, but for the presence of her husband. Then, by degrees, came hinted tales to her ear, which excited first her smiles, and then her fears. Ildegonda was, at once, a woman and a protestant, and she held all intromissions with things supernatural, not only in womanly dread, but in religious horror. She observed a frequent cloud descending upon the brow of her lord; he sank suddenly, even in the midst of playful conversation, into the deepest abstraction; and, on more than one occasion, he rose from her side in the middle of the night, when she appeared to be asleep, and went forth from the castle.

The mind of Ildegonda was not naturally firm; but her religious enthusiasm gave it a tone which was of equal influence. Her husband was too kind and too good, for her to suppose that he had as yet fallen; but he was evidently hovering around the snare of the Enemy, and she resolved, with the aid of God, to effect his preservation.

One night, when he had gone to bed more gloomy and abstracted than ever, she feigned to fall into a deep sleep; and, at the middle hour, as she expected, he rose softly from her side. When he had left the apartment, she sprang nimbly up, and, throwing round

her a cloak, stole after him unobserved. On this occasion, he did not quit the castle, but walked, with an assured step, through various narrow and winding passages, towards a part of the building she had never visited before. The moon-beams streaming through a loop-hole, here and there, afforded just as much light as was necessary to prevent her from stumbling, but, at length, even this was no more. She could no longer touch the walls, with outspread hands, as she had done before. The sound of a door shutting softly behind her, fell upon her ear; and she found that she had entered an apartment. A small, but intense light shone, like a star, at the further end, by which, when her eyes had become accustomed to the gloom of the place, she could observe a shadowy, phantom-like figure seated at a table.

"Art thou at length resolved?" demanded a voice, so singularly hollow and indistinct, that Ildegonda could have fancied it came from beneath the floor.

There was no answer; but she heard a catching of the breath, as if her husband had suppressed, by a strong effort, the reply that had come to his lips.

"We are in the hour of fate," continued the voice; "but bethink thee, that there is yet time, should thy cowardice make it necessary, to adopt another heir to the house of Ardenstein."

"I am no coward," replied Leonard, "and, if you doubt the fact, put me to the test. You have offered me inexhaustible wealth and length of days equal to your own; but life and gold are not happiness, and if

you cannot confer upon me the jewel, of what avail is the casket?"

"Degenerate boy! Is not happiness renown? To be the fear, the wonder,—perchance, the adoration of mankind,—is not that to be happy? What have *I* not sacrificed to be the root of a tree, beneath whose shadow the sons of men shall take shelter, and on whose branches the princes of the powers of the air shall alight?"

"That is the question—name the amount of your sacrifice!"

"*Myself.*" There was a deep pause, and Ildegonda's blood curdled at the meaning which she imagined the avowal to contain, and at the calmness with which it was received by her husband.

"Art thou ready?" demanded the lord Conrad more sternly; "Wilt thou enter upon thine inheritance? Knowest thou not that, before the last sands of this hour-glass be run, thou wilt be the sole living representative of the house of Ardenstein?"

"Bear with me yet a moment," replied Leonard: "there is a question, and a solemn one, which it is necessary to put; but not here. My soul is sick with the gloom of this place. I would fain have the canopy of heaven above my head, and talk with you, face to face, by the light of the sky. Grant this, and I obey!"

"Thy question," said the dark figure, rising, "relates to——"

"Not here!—not here!—it would sound like blas-

phemy. Lead on:" and, after a moment's pause, the lord Conrad left the apartment by a door behind him, as noiselessly as a shadow.

It was Ildegonda's first thought to rush after, and withhold her husband from following, but, before she could collect her senses, he was already gone. She seized the small lamp, and examined, not without trembling, the table on which it stood, and the room around. Every thing concurred to confirm her suspicions and arouse her horror. Bones, skulls, and other remains of human bodies cumbered the floor. On the table there lay open a huge volume, written in Latin, and provided with clasps, and protruding indices, in the fashion of what was commonly called a Magic Book. She had no time for reflection. The only cognisable idea in her mind was that of her beloved exposed to the temptations of one of the ministers of Satan upon earth. She touched the volume with the flame of the lamp, and, as it blazed suddenly up even to the roof, she fled with a shriek from the room.

When she reached the skirt of the forest, the two receding figures were still dimly visible in the moonlight, but, the next moment, they vanished among the trees. She continued to press wildly on, however, in the same direction, and, at length, on reaching a small open space in the densest part of the wood, she saw the objects of her pursuit standing still beside a pit, in the centre, which resembled a grave. The spot was much more elevated than the rest of the forest, and a

distinct view could be obtained, on looking back, of the turrets of the castle appearing above the tree tops. The phantom-like figure of the lord Conrad stood at what appeared to be the foot of the grave, with the face, or rather the cowl which covered it, directed towards the earth. At the opposite end was Leonard, gazing upon his mysterious ancestor. Ildegonda, concealed from observation by the shadow of the trees, was near enough to witness the scene as distinctly as the faint beams of the moon permitted.

"Thy question," said the lord Conrad, solemnly, "relates to the sanctity or otherwise of my daring studies in the eyes of God. I am unable to give the answer so fully as I could wish; for, if a man attained even to the power of moving the globe like a foot-ball, he would still be an infant in the knowledge of things spiritual, and of the Father of spirits. This I can say, however, that my researches were ever accompanied by fasting and prayer; and that I never succeeded in advancing a single step without giving due thanks to the Divine Disposer of events." A sigh of relief escaped from the heart of Ildegonda.

"As for the face which thou desirest to see," continued the lord Conrad, "it is not, as thou supposest, a mirror in which thou mayest behold what thine own will be. These things I might have explained before; and it is only now, when truly and literally at the brink of the grave, I perceive that I have been misled by the vain feelings engendered by the habit of undisputed rule. Thou art now in the pride of health,

and strength, and manly beauty, and these will suffer no deterioration for a space which will satisfy thy wildest desires. Art thou content?"

"I am."

"And I,—I am the founder of a race which will rival, except in impiety, the old Titans! Hah!—it is at hand. I feel the unloosing, soft and stealthy though it be, of the silver cord, and, in a few moments more, Conrad will be dust. Return, then, my son, and, in the book thou hast so often seen before me, thou wilt find the path of thy high destiny."

"Thy words are heard, my father," said Leonard with awe, "for behold a signal from the tower!" and, at the moment, there rose up from the castle, a column of flame which cast a wide glare over the forest. Ildegonda, with a wild shriek, rushed from her concealment, and threw herself at her husband's feet.

"The book is destroyed," she cried, "and I am the incendiary!"—Her words were lost in what seemed to be a clap of thunder, and the tower, so long inhabited by the lord Conrad, fell groaning to the earth.

When Leonard succeeded in recovering the senses of his wife, they looked round for their companion, although terrified to meet his eye, They found in the grave, wrapped in his dark cloak—a *skeleton*, with only enough of the integuments entire to keep the parts together, and give the whole something approaching to the outline of a human body!

Here concludes, abruptly, the tradition of THE GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER.

THE LOVER.

BY C. WEBBE.

What frets thee, thou fond boy,
Thou looker-down of joy?
What grief is in thy keeping,
That thou art ever weeping?
Why are thine eyes tear-drowned,
And bent upon the ground,
As if the daily light
Were hateful to thy sight?
Why dost thou breathe in sighs?
Speak sad soliloquies?
Why shun the haunts of men,
To be the denizen
Of gloomy wood and glen,
Lone rock and sea-worn cave,
Where, when the mad winds rave,
Thou answerest them with moans,
And thrilling cries and groans?—
"Thou lovest!"—Oh fool-madness!
Oh joy that's made of sadness!

Oh dove that sees no shore!
Oh hope that hopes no more!
Oh truth that is a lie!
Oh life that soon must die!

I do not marvel now
That sorrow clouds thy brow;
That melancholy shades
Where sunbeam ne'er invades,
The dreariness of woods,
And solemn solitudes,
Where seldom foot disturbs
The grossly-growing herbs,
And only one sad bird
Is in the dusk-hours heard,
And only one dark spring
Makes mournful murmuring
Among the shadowing trees,—
I wonder not that these
Are much more welcome than
The cheerful haunts of man,
The song — the generous feast,
The wit by wit increased,
The bowl — the genial guest,
The dance, and wave-like whirl
Of many a graceful girl,
That would you but compare
With her who bred your care,
And robs your heart of rest,
Would make *her* chain a hair!

What if thy mistress leave thee,
And what if she deceive thee?
What if fond fools have died
To swell her beauty's pride?
Live thou, and let her see
That thou as cold canst be;
And go a welcome wooer
To one who will be truer!

Thou foolish-faithful boy,
If thou wouldst board with joy,
Again with cheerful eye
Look on the daylit sky,
Enjoy thy days on earth,
Know careless hours of mirth,
And be what thou hast been,
Gay-eyed, with soul serene,
And genial-glowing mien,
Dismiss this pining folly,
This maddening melancholy,
And be, if now you can,
A lover, but a man!

THE ORIGIN OF FOLKSTONE.

An Antiquarian Sketch.

BY W. H. HARRISON.

If the reader has ever visited Folkstone, he will have wondered, and, but for the enlightenment he is about to receive, would have gone on wondering to the end of his days, what could have induced the choice of such a site for the erection of a town, which it is impossible to traverse in any direction but at the imminent peril of life and limb. The following is its true history, which I promulge with the greater confidence, inasmuch as I can vouch for its entire originality. I am aware, however, that an attempt to impugn its authenticity will be made by my friend C—, who maintains that he possesses the only true version of the affair in a MS. discovered at the bottom of an old pitch kettle, which was fished up from the basin of one of her majesty's dock-yards, and which he, and a conclave of brother antiquaries, pronounced, after fifteen nights' investigation, to be a sacrificial vessel of the ancient Romans. But to my story.

A certain king of the Titans, finding, to adopt his own words, (for he was a political economist,) that the productiveness of the soil of his dominions exceeded the wants of his subjects, and that, as an inevitable result, the said subjects, being greatly over-fed, waxed saucy, and were exceedingly difficult to govern, determined on founding an additional city, to carry off the surplus produce, and thus bring his refractory lieges to a fitting state of starvation and good order.

Not caring, however, to encounter the delay as well as the trouble of building a city, he resolved on accomplishing his object *per saltum;* and accordingly, one fine summer morning, when, the sea being remarkably calm, he was in no danger of wetting the upper leathers of his pumps, he walked across the channel; and, landing on the coast of Kent, made a foray up the country, carrying off every village that lay in his way; that is to say, all the houses, and such of the inhabitants as were unluckily "at home" at the time of his visit.

Those of the natives who chanced to be at work in the fields were horror struck at being thus *un*-domiciled, and, by a process more summary than that of the New Poor Laws, separated from their wives and little ones.

Now it happened that there was a certain cobbler who lived at the outskirts of one of the hamlets, in a stall which, either from its humble size, had escaped the eye of the Titan; or, what is more probable, (for Crispin was poor to a proverb,) had not been considered worth

"lifting" by his Titanic majesty. The cobbler, having little to lose, was suddenly seized with a patriotic furor, and determined to die in defence of his "home and his hearth," of which, by the way, the Titan had left him in undisturbed possession. Accordingly, rushing forth, lap-stone in hand, he put himself at the head of his panic-stricken countrymen, brought them, as St. Patrick did the snakes and vipers of ancient Erin, "to a sense of their situation;" and, finally, rallied them into a pursuit of the spoiler.

The Titan, having collected some half score of hamlets in his foray, had "his hands full," and, accordingly, preferring flight to fighting, made the best of his way to the shore. Although hotly pursued by the plundered villagers, there is little doubt that he would have carried off his booty in triumph, had not the gallant Crispin, by a dexterous hurl, addressed his lap-stone to the Titan's bump of appropriation, with such effect, that the spoiler, "bothered entirely," instantly dropped his prey, and went splashing across the channel to his own country, a wiser, if not an honester monster than he left it.

The villagers, unable, of course, to remove their habitations thus deposited, as the children say, all *higgeldy-piggeldy*, had no alternative but to take possession of them as they stood, and stand to this day, in such admired confusion, that you look out of the window of one house perpendicularly down the chimney of another.

The lap-stone with which this singular feat of dexterity

and heroism was performed, became an object of great veneration to the people; and was called *Lapis Populi*, or the Folk's Stone. Hence the name of the town, whose early history it has been my distinguished honour thus to illustrate.

The legend adds, to the credit of popular gratitude, that the cobbler was, by the unanimous vote of his countrymen, elected the first mayor of Folkstone.

What became of the lap-stone itself is not accurately known; but it is supposed to have been carried off in the night by a stranger, whom the towns-folk described as a short gentleman who had two letters before his name and three after it.

ON A FLUTE-PLAYER,

WHO PLAYED NONE BUT MELANCHOLY AIRS.

"A very sad dog."

Not all unblest is he who, in his woes,
Such solace from his own sweet music borrows;
And, when his tank of misery o'erflows,
Thus makes his flute the waste-*pipe* of his sorrows.

H.

THE FACE OF BEAUTY.

Her sweet, slow smile, like hope to hearts forlorn,
Shed spiritual sunshine o'er her gentle face:
And from her eyes a splendour, like the morn,
Lit up with lustre every natural grace
That lived therein—to die, and be re-born,
And look still lovelier in some lovelier place.
And as the sun, when flowery grows the thorn,
Glancing the meads along, will pause a space
To kiss the silvery lily, or admire
The diffident beauty of the violet,—
So on her eyes, which burned with gentler fire
And holier light than ever rose or set,
I looked, and, reverent of their beauty, gazed,
And felt it at my heart—thrilled, passion-touched,
amazed.

C. W.

Painted by H. Richter

Engraved by H. Davies.

WINTER TIME SNOW.

Published by Smith, Elder & Co 65 Cornhill

WINNING THE GLOVES;

OR,

The Wizard Guest.

BY W. H. HARRISON.

"WHO are you?—whence come you? and what seek you here at this hour?" was the gruff address of the porter of the castle of Urbino, to a mounted traveller, whose loud and quickly repeated knocks at the gate, argued no slight impatience at being kept on the outside of it.

"I marvel," was the answer, "that you, whom, from the important post you hold, I take to be a man of discretion, should propound to me three questions,—two of which, had I an object in deceiving you, I could as easily answer by a lie as by the truth; while, as to what I seek, methinks the pelting shower, which is drenching me to the skin, should sufficiently explain."

"Nevertheless," rejoined the other, "I must needs report your arrival to my superior, before I can open the gate."

"Nay, then," exclaimed the traveller, "you may e'en spare yourself the trouble; for before you can return, both I and my horse will be washed away bodily into the torrent below. Tut, man, for what do you take me?—a knight errant come to storm your stronghold single-handed?"

"Are you alone?" inquired the janitor, peering through a grated aperture in the massive gate.

"Yes," was the reply, "as you may see, even by this light."

"Ay," rejoined the other, "and, by the same light, if you use your eyes, you may discover a pent-house, a few yards to your left, which will afford you shelter for a brief space, until I have received authority to admit you. By what style shall I announce you?"

"Rolandi, a merchant of Firenze, if you must needs know," returned the traveller, who, expressing his opinion of the porter's pertinacity in terms, which, however they might have augmented the self-knowledge of that functionary, would have added little to his vanity, sought the shelter to which he had been directed.

Leaving the traveller to endure the delay as he best may, we will follow the trusty janitor to an apartment, which, by virtue of a few shelves of worm-eaten folios and mouldy manuscripts, was dignified by the appellation of the library. It was a lofty, although, in comparison with other chambers in the building, somewhat small room; in which, on opposite sides of a

blazing hearth, were seated two young females, whose personal attractions, though their styles of beauty were different, were of a superior order. One was, apparently, a year or two the elder of the twain, and had a slight advantage of the other in point of stature; she had, also, a somewhat graver expression of countenance, and a more dignified bearing than her companion, whose features, though beaming with good temper and intelligence, were of a more arch and girlish character. The name of the elder lady was Bianca,—that of the younger, Emilia.

"Well, Matteo," inquired the latter, "to what are we indebted for a sight of your iron visage, at this hour of the evening?"

"An' it please you, lady," said the porter, addressing himself to Bianca, "there is a traveller at the gate, who asks shelter from the storm."

"Is he young or old?" inquired Emilia, not giving her cousin time to reply; "handsome or ugly—dark or fair?"

"This is scarcely a night in which to tell the complexion of a man's beard, lady," was the reply; "but the impatience with which he met my refusal to admit him without orders, savoured somewhat of the hot blood of youth."

"How provoking!" exclaimed the fair querist; "one might as well have an owl or a bat for a janitor, as thee!"

"Prythee, Emilia, cease," interrupted her cousin; "while you are trifling, this benighted traveller is ex-

posed to the fury of the storm;—mercy! how it rages! Does he come alone, Matteo?"

"So he says," was the reply; "and I have no reason to doubt it, for I reconnoitered him from the keep, and could perceive no one near him."

"We have nothing to fear from a single traveller," rejoined Bianca; "so admit him without delay."

"Beware, cousin," exclaimed Emilia; "remember the injunctions of our worthy guardian, who strictly charged you to admit no one in his absence; and I suspect that his prohibition was especially levelled at *single* travellers."

"I care not," responded the other; "for although my uncle has chosen to establish himself in the castle of my ancestors, under the pretext of taking better care of it and me, I am mistress here, and will render an account of my actions to no one."

"A most commendable resolution, my dear coz," rejoined the other, "if you can but hold to it; and, credit me, Bianca, I am the last person in the world to counsel submission to an usurping guardian; but what can we poor weak women oppose to the will of an unscrupulous tyrant?"

"I know him, Emilia, for what he is," was the response; "and I know, also, that he will stop at nothing to compel me into a marriage with his ruffian and dissolute son; while I—friendless orphan that I am!—have no present means of appealing from his oppression. He little knows me, however, if he supposes that I would not perish in the deepest dungeon of my own castle,

rather than lend myself to his designs; to which his need, not less than his natural rapacity, impel him."

The dialogue was interrupted by the entrance of a youth, who officiated as a sort of page, followed by the newly arrived guest. The latter, who had availed himself of an opportunity of throwing aside his travelling cloak, and arranging his toilet as well as circumstances would permit, was a man apparently about five-and-twenty, with features remarkable rather for intellectual expression than beauty. He was somewhat above the middle stature, slenderly, but compactly made. His dress, although plain for the custom of the day, was of the finest materials, and newest fashion.

He advanced towards the ladies, and with graceful, though somewhat grave courtesy, thanked them for the shelter which they had so hospitably afforded to him. There was a slight degree of lameness in his gait, which he accounted for by stating, that, in riding through the forest, on the skirts of which the castle was built, he had struck his foot against the trunk of a tree.

Bianca immediately ordered refreshments to be placed before the stranger, who partook of them sparingly. He evidently felt the restraint naturally imposed on him by the youth and beauty of his fair entertainers; but, nevertheless, in the few remarks in which he indulged, he displayed a mind of no ordinary cultivation, as well as an acquaintance with the cus-

toms and manners of other nations, which could only have been acquired by travel.

The stranger took his leave for the night, immediately on finishing his repast, and was attended to his chamber by the page Alberto.

The door had scarcely closed upon their guest, when Emilia exclaimed, "So, Bianca, you have frozen him out at last!"

"What mean you, Emilia?" inquired her cousin.

"Mean?" was the rejoinder, "why that you have spoiled us a delightful evening. Here have we two forlorn damsels been shut up together, for seven mortal weeks, like a brace of nuns, and when, as if dropped from the clouds, there comes a handsome cavalier to break the monotony of our solitude, you receive him as stately as an empress, and reply to every sentence he utters with a bow or a monosyllable, which, doubtless, he interpreted rightly, and therefore availed himself of the first reasonable pretext to depart."

"You do not consider, Emilia," replied Bianca, "that my position is one of extreme delicacy."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed her volatile companion; "here have I, for the last half hour, been dying to hear the stranger's account of his travels in foreign lands—of dear heretic England, where the women have their own way; where, although every man's house, they say, is a castle, they do not shut up young damsels because they will not marry griffins; and where the church does not compel them to tell their beads and

their secrets, periodically, as ours does. It is true, Father Pietro tells us that the English are all devils; and it is not for me to contradict him, although, I must say, that the only Englishman I ever saw, looked infinitely more like an angel than a devil. Then, again, I was longing to ask our visitor about Egypt, and the pyramids, and Cleopatra's needle, the eye of which, they say, overlooks half the world; and to beg of him, when he goes there again, to bring me a pet ibis, or a tame crocodile."

"Thou art a silly girl," remarked her graver cousin, with a smile, however, which she could not forbear; "but to confess the truth, our guest has somewhat puzzled me. If there be aught in physiognomy, he is no ordinary man; I mean not in point of rank, for he may be what he professes himself—a merchant. Did you observe the expression of his eye? I marked him once when Alberto handed him the cup: the stripling, albeit of the boldest, and one whose modesty is not likely to stand in the way of his promotion, quailed beneath the glance of the stranger, and spilled the wine upon the salver, before the other could take the goblet. I say it in no inhospitable spirit, but I wish we were well rid of him."

"So say not I," responded the other damsel, "for I think him a very pleasant gentleman."

It is not easy to describe the feelings of the elder lady, when, on the following morning, the page entered the breakfast-room, with the intelligence that the accident which the stranger had met with in the forest,

had proved more serious than was at first apprehended; and that his ankle had become so much swollen in the course of the night, that there was not the least chance of his being able to put his foot in the stirrup for some days.

Even Emilia, although she professed to be greatly rejoiced at an accident which promised her a better acquaintance with the agreeable stranger, could not shut her eyes to the inconvenience, and probable embarrassment which his prolonged sojourn threatened to entail upon them, especially in the event of the return of the marchese, their guardian; a more charitably disposed person than whom, might regard with some suspicion the presence of a young and well-favoured stranger at the castle, under existing circumstances.

Not choosing, however, to appear to participate in her cousin's feelings on the occasion, Emilia exclaimed, "Why, Bianca, what a fuss you make about the man! He will not eat us, and if his stay should be prolonged a few days, we can appoint yonder slip of a page to attend upon him; and if, on his being able to quit his chamber, the common decencies of hospitality should compel us to any closer communication with him, we must summon old Teresa, the housekeeper, to play propriety on the occasion; and she is old and ugly enough in all conscience, for the duty."

Matters went on, for some days, without any occurrence to vary the monotony which usually prevailed at the castle: the lame guest kept, if not exactly to his chamber, at least to that angle of the building which

had been assigned to him ; while the ladies contented themselves by sending, every morning and evening, to inquire after his health.

They were, however, much struck with the altered demeanour of their page, on all occasions on which the stranger was concerned. Alberto was faithful and devotedly attached to his mistress ; but he was high-spirited, somewhat overbearing, and, moreover, disposed to hold exceedingly cheap all that bore not the stamp of nobility ; and yet he never mentioned the merchant guest but in terms of respect, amounting almost to awe.

It was on the fourth day of the stranger's sojourn, that one of the female domestics rushed into the apartment in which Bianca and her cousin were conversing together, and proclaimed the unwelcome intelligence, that a band of free-booters, aware, probably, of the absence of the marchese and the majority of his followers, had presented themselves at the gate of the castle, and were demanding admittance. Their summons was backed by a threat, that, if they were driven to the alternative of forcing an entrance, they would put every inhabitant to the sword.

Bianca, although, as may easily be conceived, in no little alarm, did not altogether lose her presence of mind on the occasion. She sent for Alberto, who assured her that the robbers would have little difficulty in making a forcible entry, and still less in overcoming any resistance which could be opposed to them by the few male domestics whom the marchese had left in charge of the castle.

After a moment's deliberation, Bianca determined on requesting the presence of the stranger guest at their little council of war; reasonably enough arguing, that if he could not aid them by his advice, it was but right that he should be apprised of their common peril.

The merchant instantly obeyed the summons, though evidently still suffering from the effects of his accident. He presented himself before the ladies with the same calm, grave, but respectful bearing which had distinguished him in the first instance; nor, on being informed that the castle was beset by a band of robbers, headed by a chief, who though recently added to their number, was the terror of the district, did his countenance betray any emotion, except what might be gathered from a slight—very slight elevation of the eye-brow.

He replied, that he did not think the place would hold out for half an hour against the force by which it was beleaguered; and, therefore, although the character of the band was little security for their abstinence from violence, even should they be quietly admitted, yet as resistance would infallibly tend to bloodshed, he should counsel an immediate surrender.

Alberto, who, to do him justice, would gladly have struck a blow in defence of the old walls, shrugged his shoulders, and departed to give the requisite instructions. The windows of the apartment in which the interview we have described took place, opened upon a sort of small lawn, or grass-plot, over which the rob-

bers must necessarily pass in their way to that part of the building which was occupied by the ladies and their affrighted household.

The merchant, after an ineffectual attempt to calm the fears of Bianca and Emilia, stepped out upon the lawn, as if with the intention of parleying with the assailants on their arrival. In a few minutes the castle gates were thrown open, and the band were not long in finding their way to the spot on which Rolandi was standing. They rushed forward, and, regardless of their pledge for the safety of the inhabitants of the castle, expressed great indignation at the delay, trifling as it was, which had preceded their admission. A shriek from one of the females within, for a moment caused the merchant to turn his head in the direction whence it proceeded. Meanwhile the chief of the robbers, who was a few yards in advance of his band, had approached, and was about to seize the merchant. The latter turned slowly round, and fixed his cold, stern eye upon his assailant.

The effect upon the robber captain was perfectly electrical. His weapon, which he had raised with his right hand, as he prepared to grasp the merchant with his left, dropped to the earth, and he quailed beneath the glance of the other, like a lashed hound.

Rolandi spoke not a word, nor did he deign the bandit another look; but, waving his hand, as if to command his absence, turned away, and, without revisiting the apartment occupied by his hostess and her terrified companions, betook himself to his own.

The bandit captain watched the retreat of the mysterious being by whom he had been so unaccountably overawed, and it was not until Rolandi had disappeared, that the other seemed able to draw his breath. The first use which he made of his partially recovered faculties, was to collect his followers, who had witnessed the scene with an astonishment scarcely inferior in degree to their leader's terror, and, in a few minutes, the castle was entirely clear of the unwelcome visitors, and the gate closed upon them. A few murmurs of disappointment, indeed, escaped them in their retreat; but these were instantly silenced by their commander, who, submissive as was his demeanour before the man who had so unexpectedly confronted him, appeared to hold undisputed sovereignty over his band.

"Well, Bianca," said Emilia, on the following morning, while they were taking their accustomed stroll in the castle garden, "what think you of our guest now?"

"I scarcely know what to think of him," was the reply; "he is a most extraordinary person, and, independently of the gratitude which, in common with yourself, I entertain towards him for his well-timed and almost miraculous interposition in our favour, last evening, I do not hesitate to acknowledge that he has interested me greatly. That he is no common character is quite evident; but who he is that thus, by a glance of his eye, can overawe and disperse a band of the most desperate robbers that ever infested the country,

passes my powers of conjecture. What think you he is?"

"I have thought much on the subject," answered the other, "and hitherto have hit upon but one solution of the riddle."

"And what may that be?" inquired Bianca.

"That he is the captain of the band of which the worthy, who headed the expedition of last night, was only the lieutenant; and that we owe our preservation to an interference prompted by gratitude for the shelter and succour which we have afforded to the self-styled merchant Rolandi."

"I should be sorry, very sorry," exclaimed Bianca, "if your explanation of the mystery be the true one; and yet appearances, I confess, are much in favour of your theory."

"Nay, cousin," was the rejoinder, "only think how romantic it would be to have a lover in the chief of a gallant band of freebooters!"

"Romance, Emilia," said the other, "can never consecrate crime; and were my interest for this stranger far deeper than it is, it would, were your conjectures correct, be absorbed in abhorrence of his guilt."

A turn in their walk suddenly disclosed to them the subject of their conversation, reclining on a step which formed part of the pedestal of an ancient urn.

"Here he is," cried the volatile Emilia; "and fast asleep, as I live! Merchant or no merchant, I will win a pair of gloves!" and without giving a thought either to the hazard or the impropriety of the action, she

touched his forehead lightly with her lips, and, the next instant, was flying down the avenue with the swiftness of a fawn.

"Silly, thoughtless, imprudent girl!" exclaimed Bianca, when she joined her light-hearted cousin; "how could you expose yourself and me to the danger of the dilemma in which the stranger's waking would have placed us? What would your Lorenzo think of you, were he to know of this unseasonable piece of levity?"

"What he would think I scarcely know," was the reply; "but I suppose he would feel it incumbent on him to be very jealous, and cut the stranger's throat; which I do not intend he shall do, and therefore shall not tell my hero a word about it."

"You are a sad girl," said Bianca; "and if you make not a steadier wife than you are a mistress, I fear your hero, as you call him, will have a sorry bargain of you."

"Nevertheless," rejoined the other, "in a graver tone, "I would that that were all he has to apprehend."

"What mean you?" inquired Bianca.

"I have more than once," resumed Emilia, "hinted to you my suspicions that the meetings which, within the last year, have been held under this roof, and at which our very respectable guardian has presided, are not altogether for objects which the state would approve. I have remarked, moreover, that the society of the worthies who compose the conclave, is ex-

ceedingly repugnant to Lorenzo; whose sole inducement in accepting of the marchese's hospitalities, if such they can be termed, may be referred to a certain madcap, who shall be nameless. I have too much confidence in his loyalty and good sense to suppose that he would deliberately lend himself to any treasonable design; and therefore I hope that these assemblages are merely for the purposes of a faction, to which Lorenzo gives no other sanction than may be inferred from his being often found in their company."

"I observed," said Bianca, "that, on the last two or three occasions on which he has visited the castle, he has been more than ordinarily reserved, and that he has lost much of his wonted elasticity of spirits."

"A circumstance," rejoined the other, "which has not escaped me; and upon which I have remarked to himself, but could glean nothing but evasive and unsatisfactory replies. It may be that, although not approving of these meetings, he does not feel himself at liberty to disclose their object."

"I hope and trust," was the reply, "that you have no just cause for apprehension on his account, Emilia; but the marchese is ambitious, and has the craft to beguile firmer men than Lorenzo, into a furtherance of his designs."

The ladies returned to their apartment, and saw nothing more of the stranger. Towards the evening, a messenger arrived with intelligence that the marchese, with his sons and a party of friends, would reach the castle on the afternoon of the following day. This news

was little calculated for the consolation of the fair cousins; who, independently of the annoyance which the odious attentions of the marchese's eldest son occasioned to the one, and the uneasiness caused to the other by her lover's participation in such society, had every reason to apprehend the most disagreeable consequences from the presence of the stranger guest.

In proportion then to the intensity of their fears on this subject, was the delight with which they heard, at nightfall, that the merchant had decamped, without beat of drum. True it is, he had greatly overpaid the hospitality he had received, by his signal deliverance of them from the incursion of the free-booters, but the ladies were somewhat at a loss to account for his want of courtesy in not making, or at least leaving, his adieus.

The cousins retired to their respective chambers, between which, however, there was a direct communication. The surprise, not altogether unmingled with alarm, with which Emilia beheld upon her toilette a *pair of white gloves*, the reader will be at no loss to conceive. They were of silk, and of exquisitely curious workmanship. A note accompanied them, which was as follows:

"If thou hast a friend in whom thou takest more than a sister's interest, and there be a snare in his path, let him wear these gloves, as a lady's favour, in his cap, and they will deliver him in the hour of danger.

"ROLANDI."

With a burning blush upon her cheek, and her heart bounding with agitation, Emilia rushed into the adjoining chamber, where she found her cousin under the influence of as much surprise and scarcely less confusion; for Bianca had also discovered upon her toilette a note. It enclosed a leaf of ivy and a sprig of myrtle, and ran thus:

"Farewell! Thanks for thy courtesy! If, among the expected arrivals, there be an individual whose presence is obnoxious to thee, cause the ivy leaf to be placed on his plate, in his goblet, or between the leaves of his missal; and, be he at meat or mass, at the banquet or the altar, full or fasting, he will put the Arno between you in half an hour, and never cross it again. Thou hast already witnessed my power; and if, in a recurring season of perplexity or peril, thou wouldst prove it again, place the myrtle on thy bosom in the morning, and, before the eastern turret of the castle hath spanned the moat with its shadow, I will be with thee.

"Rolandi."

"What think you now?" inquired Bianca of her cousin, when they had sufficiently recovered from the surprise into which these singular and mysterious communications had thrown them.

"That the stranger might have found better pastime than playing upon the credulity of two simple maidens," was the reply.

"I do not believe that such was his purpose," remarked Bianca.

"Why, surely, my grave cousin does not suppose that these tokens possess the virtues ascribed to them by the stranger?" exclaimed the younger lady.

"Doubtless," said the other, "you will laugh at my credulity, when I tell you that I will put one of them to the test, on the first occasion on which the marchese compels our presence at his boisterous banquet, and that I conclude, will not be long after his return."

Agreeably to his previous announcement, the marchese made his appearance on the following afternoon, accompanied by a somewhat larger party than he usually brought with him; and in honour of whom he ordered a splendid banquet to be prepared, at which, as Bianca had anticipated, the ladies' presence was requested in terms equivalent to a command.

Repugnant as such a scene must necessarily have been to a delicate and high minded woman, it was rendered doubly disgusting by the fulsome attentions which Vinzentio, the marchese's eldest son, thought proper to address to her whom he was pleased to consider as his betrothed bride. Nor did these attentions become more tolerable as the banquet proceeded. At last, the natural insolence of his disposition becoming excited by the deep potations with which he had qualified the viands, he called for another cup of wine, and challenged the company to pledge him to the health of his intended bride.

The cheek of Bianca blushed a deeper crimson at

this new insult; and, but that she was anxiously waiting the issue of the experiment she was about to make of Rolandi's talisman, she would have instantly quitted the banqueting room.

Vinzentio rose, and calling upon his comrades to follow his example, he took the wine from the hand of Alberto, and lifted it to the level of his lip; when, at the instant that he was about to do honour to the toast, his eye became fixed upon the goblet, as though an asp had been coiled within it, and dashing it untasted upon the floor, he hurried from the hall with a precipitation which left no time for question. Indeed, so great was the surprise occasioned by the frenzy which appeared suddenly to have seized upon him, that it was not until his compotators heard his horse's hoofs in the court-yard, that they were able to take any measures to stay his flight. Some of them then rushed to the gate, but it was only to learn from the porter that the fugitive had started at full speed, and had intimated, as he passed, that he should not return.

None having been aware of the presence of the ivy leaf in the cup, besides the two cousins, and Alberto who had contrived, unperceived, to place it there, it was not recognised as the cause of Vinzentio's agitation; and thus the marchese and his guests were utterly at a loss to account for the freak of his hopeful heir on any other score than that of madness. The occurrence had the effect of abruptly terminating the banquet; and Bianca and her cousin gladly availed

themselves of the opportunity to retire to their own apartment.

"What says my infidel cousin now?" was the triumphant exclamation of Bianca, as soon as she found herself alone with Emilia.

"That your phœnix of merchants has proved himself to be an impostor," was the reply.

"As how?" inquired the other, with somewhat of asperity.

"Why," rejoined Emilia, "that the merchant is no merchant at all."

"Nay;" said Bianca, "there I agree with you; but I hope you have given up your bandit-chief theory."

"Yes;" was the answer, "but in favour of one which you will scarcely prefer to it."

"And what may that be?" asked Bianca.

"That he is either a devil or an angel," responded Emilia.

"That is rather a wide guess, my cousin," resumed Bianca; "but let me ask you, has the result of this evening's experiment determined you on proving the virtue of the gloves."

"Surely," replied Emilia, "if I can prevail upon Lorenzo to accept the gift."

"Which you will scarcely do by informing him of the mode in which they were won," remarked the other, as the cousins parted for the night.

On the following day, towards evening, Bianca, rather to her annoyance than her surprise, received a message from the marchese, requesting her to attend

him in his closet. Well assured that if she did not go to him, the privacy of her own apartment would be invaded, she obeyed, and found him pacing the room, and with a troubled and perplexed expression of countenance. He motioned her to a seat, but remained standing while he spoke. "Bianca," said he, "I must be plain with you. Think not that the exultation which you vainly endeavoured to conceal last night, when Vinzentio so abruptly left us, escaped my observation. Whether you had any knowledge of, or participation in the cause of his departure, I know not, nor do I care; but your triumph will be short. His brother remains, and to-morrow's setting sun shall see you his bride."

"It shall rather gild my grave!" was the firm reply of the spirited girl.

"That grave shall be a *living* one then," was the rejoinder, "if I be not obeyed."

"My sainted parent," returned Bianca, "in an evil hour for his daughter's peace, made you the guardian of my wealth; but he gave you no power in the disposal of my hand."

"I did not send for you," responded the other, "to argue the matter, but to decide it. You go not forth from this place alive, but as the bride of your cousin Francesco. Choose you, therefore, between sitting as mistress of these halls, or becoming the sole tenant of the western turret, whence — it was once a tradition of your family — none who entered it against their will, ever came forth alive."

"You needed not to have told me that I am in your power," was the determined response of the damsel; "I know it, and with that knowledge declare to you that I would rather live the companion of the newt and the toad, than the bride of your ruffian son!"

The spirit of a long line of ancestors flashing in her indignant eyes as she thus spoke, she turned from him, and was in the act of quitting the apartment, when the marchese, interposing between her and the door, said, "Stay but a moment, Bianca, and hear my resolve. I am a ruined and desperate man. Your wealth alone can save me, and I will halt at no means to make it mine. To-morrow night, I repeat, you are the bride of my son, or a prisoner for the rest of your days. Now go to your chamber, and make your election."

Bianca rushed from the room, and sought her own apartment, where, flinging herself upon the bosom of her cousin Emilia, she gave vent to the tears which pride had repressed in the presence of her tyrant guardian, and acquainted her with the doom which had been pronounced against her. Emilia was giddy and thoughtless, but she was wanting neither in feeling nor spirit; and thus her words of condolence with her cousin, were mingled with expressions of the deepest indignation against her unmanly persecutor.

That night was a sleepless night to the two cousins, who rose from their beds unrefreshed and sad.

"Emilia!" exclaimed Bianca, "you will think me weak and credulous; but we have twice proved the power of our mysterious guest. I will test it the

third time;" and as she spoke she took the sprig of myrtle from a vase in which she had deposited it, and placed it on her bosom.

The day wore on; evening approached, and then, with every moment, fled a portion of the hope,—vague it is true,—which had sustained her. To add to her perplexity and grief, there came a message from the marchese, expressive of his expectation that she would attire herself in her bridal dress within half an hour of sunset.

"O, Emilia!" cried the girl, her spirit giving way under the weight of her sorrow. "I am lost, lost!—abandoned by Heaven and by man!"

"Heaven abandons not the innocent!" exclaimed a voice, as the door opened and disclosed to them the welcome apparition of Rolandi. "Did the ivy fail thee, that thou shouldst distrust the myrtle?" he continued. "Behold!—I am here!"

The gravity that was wont to mark his countenance, relaxed into a benevolent expression as he spoke; and, Bianca, re-assured by his presence, explained to him the strait in which she was placed.

"Trust me," responded the stranger, "yet a little while, and all may still be well. Do as thou art bidden;—array thyself as a bride, and obey the summons to the altar, inasmuch as resistance will only provoke insult and outrage from those who will not hesitate to drag thee thither;—but when there,—be firm. And now, for a brief season, farewell. Matters of import require my presence elsewhere; but trust

one whose tongue knows not the pollution of a lie, I will be with thee in the hour of trial."

Bianca would fain have implored him to stay, but the movements of the mysterious stranger were too rapid for her; the door closed, and, in a few seconds, his light step as he descended the stairs, ceased to be audible. The visit, however, was not without its beneficial effects upon Bianca, whose confidence in Rolandi was much strengthened by the result of the experiments she had already made of his mysterious influence.

The hour appointed for the bridal ceremony arrived, and Francesco, with the grin of a satyr, presented himself to conduct Bianca to the altar of the castle chapel. The fair girl shrank from the pollution of his touch, and sought the more welcome support of her cousin, Emilia; while the self-elected bridegroom, having no alternative but to walk by their side, looked as amiable as an alligator before breakfast.

On entering the chapel, they found the priest at the altar, by the side of which were the marchese and the whole of his guests. Bianca suffered herself to be conducted by her uncle to the altar; but when there, she protested firmly and solemnly against the violence which had been offered to her inclination, and appealed to the assembly for protection.

Alas! of those to whom that appeal was made, the majority had long since been deaf to the voice of honour; while those who were not utterly lost to a sense of shame, felt that they were too few to venture on remonstrance with any chance of success. There was

one, however, who wanted neither the heart to feel nor the courage to denounce the atrocity of the proceeding.

"Marchese!" exclaimed Lorenzo, rushing between Bianca and her uncle, "think not that I will tamely witness the profanation you would perpetrate." As he spoke he laid his hand upon the hilt of his sword; but the marchese had been prepared for the interruption, and before Lorenzo could draw his weapon, he was seized from behind by two of the other's myrmidons, who dragged him from the chapel.

Bianca again implored the protection of the bystanders; but the marchese, as with a look of triumph he marked on their countenances the effect of her appeal, exclaimed, "Infatuated girl! you might as well call for succour upon the bones of your dead ancestors which lie crumbling beneath you. You are beyond the reach of human aid. Listen then to me for the last time. There is the altar, and there the portal which, once closed upon you, you will never pass again."

As he spoke the last words, he pointed to an arched door, closing the entrance to a passage leading to the western turret, which had been used in former years as a place of confinement, and, according to tradition, had been the scene of many foul and murderous deeds.

"Lady," resumed the marchese, "we wait your election,—the altar or the dungeon?"

"The dungeon!—nay, death itself would be bliss compared with the fate to which such a marriage would consign me!" replied, or rather shrieked the wretched girl.

"The dungeon be it then," was the rejoinder of the marchese. "Away with her!"

In obedience to his mandate, two of his satellites advanced towards Bianca for the purpose of removing her, when Emilia rushed forward, and flinging herself upon the neck of her cousin, exclaimed, "Bianca, they shall not part us! As we have lived, so will we die — together."

Her feeble resistance, however, availed little against the strength of those who knew no law but their tyrant's will, and the cousins were soon parted. Bianca was dragged towards the fatal portal; the door was flung open, and though it was yet day-light, disclosed a cavern as dark as Erebus. "A torch there!" exclaimed the marchese, who stepped forward to receive one at the hands of an attendant, and then led the way to the mouth of the passage; into which, however, he had scarcely set his foot, when, to the consternation of himself and his followers, the glare of the torch was reflected by the weapons of a large body of men armed to the teeth.

"Treason!" exclaimed the marchese, as he dropped the torch and fell back upon his party.

"Thou hast well said," was the rejoinder of one who emerged suddenly from the gloom, and in whom Bianca instantly recognised Rolandi.

"The duke! the duke!" was the simultaneous exclamation of the marchese and his adherents; while the individual whom they thus rightly designated, advanced and caught the sinking girl in his arms, whispering,

"Said I not sooth Bianca?" Then turning towards the dark portal, he added, "Advance, guards, and do your duty!"

The marchese and his party, however, stopped not to try conclusions with a body of men infinitely superior in number and arms to themselves, and therefore rushed precipitately from the chapel. "Fools!" exclaimed the duke, as he watched the retreat of the traitorous band, "ye but rush from Charybdis upon Scylla."

Leaving the duke to conduct his charge to her apartment, whither Emilia had already been conveyed, in a state almost of insensibility, by some of the female domestics, we will return to Lorenzo. The tumult consequent upon the sudden appearance of the ducal troops had reached his ears in his chamber, to which he had been forced; and having soon ascertained the position of affairs, and fearing that, innocent though he was, he should share the fate of his guilty associates, he rushed out with the view of securing a steed for his flight; but finding that he could not accomplish his object without the hazard of being cut to pieces, he retraced his steps in the hope of concealing himself until the fury of the melée had somewhat abated. Unluckily, in the hurry of his retreat, he stumbled over the body of one of the slain, and before he could regain his legs, the sword of one of the duke's troopers was raised above his head. At the very instant, however, that death appeared inevitable, the soldier dropped his weapon, exclaiming, "Thank the gloves in your cap,

fair sir, that you are not cloven to the chine; the duke spares your life, but if you would remain safe, you must follow me to his presence."

Lorenzo had the wisdom to take the hint, and, after a few minutes' delay, he was admitted to an audience of the duke; who had but ill succeeded in calming Emilia's apprehension for the safety of her lover, by assuring her that the gloves, which she had prevailed on him to wear in the manner described, would protect him. "There," exclaimed his highness, as Lorenzo entered, with somewhat of the air of a culprit, "said I not that he was safe?" Then, turning to Lorenzo, he added, in a somewhat graver tone, "As for you, young gentleman, I acquit you of any participation in this plot; but you appear to have read to marvellously little profit the fable of the bird that had its neck wrung for being found in suspicious company."

The duke's explanation of the circumstances which had enabled him so successfully to enact the wizard guest, was a very simple one. He owed much to the connivance of Alberto, who had formerly held a humble post about the ducal court, and through whom he had been kept informed of the state of affairs at the castle before his visit, which, though having the appearance of accident, was part of the duke's plan. The apparently mysterious influence exercised by him over the bandit chief was referable to the fact of the latter having been, ere he fell from his "high estate," a friend and companion of the duke; and his highness, well knowing the other's disposition, had

rightly calculated on his being overawed when confronted by his sovereign. The conveyance of the two letters and their accompaniments to the toilettes of the ladies, was effected through the instrumentality of Alberto; and it is unnecessary to add that the duke was only feigning sleep when the gloves were won.

The mystery of the ivy leaf was explained by the circumstance of the duke having had, through Alberto and other sources, cognizance of the marchese's plot in all its details and ramifications, and it having come to the knowledge of his highness, that a friend of Vinzentio about the court had promised, in the event of his participation in his father's plot being discovered, to warn him of his danger by sending him an ivy leaf,—the emblem of ruin. With regard to the sprig of myrtle, the duke had arranged with Alberto, that when he perceived it in Bianca's bosom, he should instantly communicate the circumstance to his highness, who had provided the means of constant and rapid intercourse between them. The subsequent admission of the duke to the castle, and finally of the ducal troops, was also contrived by Alberto, who was intimately acquainted with the subterranean outlets of the place.

The duke's stay at the castle after the events which we have narrated, was short; but in the course of it, and one or two subsequent visits, he succeeded in convincing Bianca of the superiority of the ducal palace as a residence, to the castle; where she therefore shortly afterwards took up her abode, as the partner of his honours and his love.

Emilia and Lorenzo followed the matrimonial example. The gloves were highly prized, laid up in lavender, and transmitted to their posterity as a heir-loom; although history does not inform us whether Emilia ever explained to her liege lord the manner of their acquisition. It is said, however, that the duke was wont to look very significantly at her, whenever the gloves were alluded to.

THE STARS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE RIVAL SISTERS."

> Like the Chaldean — he could watch the stars
> Till he had peopled them with beings, bright
> As their own beams!
>
> MANFRED.

> Thy throne is darkness in the abyss of light —
> A blaze of glory that forbids the sight!
>
> DRYDEN.

All hail, majestic spheres that nightly rise,
And nightly roll in never-erring march!
Gaze of the earth, and glory of the skies,
I hail you, glittering in your azure arch!

Me have ye charmed since first your fires I deemed
The spangles that adorned night's ebon robe;
Before my wildest reveries had dreamed
Each spark a sun, each spangle was a globe!

If I admired your matchless beauty then,
In you your Maker's might I now adore;
Yet grieve that, baffling our imperfect ken,
Much as we know of you, we know no more.

O! I could gaze on you till, lost to earth,
My rapt soul seems to mingle with your fires;
And thus your laws, your nature, and your birth,
In musing accents tremblingly inquires:

Planets! both ye that seek your sire, the sun,
To bask and redden in the flaming ray;
And ye that through remotest orbits run,
Where moons and girdles light you on your way:

O! say,—are your inhabitants like ours,
In form, and soul, and frame, resembling man?
Spring they, like us, to bloom and fade as flowers,
Their hopes an idle dream — their days a span?

Say — is your helpless infancy the same?
Your youth, too oft the sport of passion's breath?
Your manhood, false ambition, wealth, and fame?
Your age, an earthly tomb — a living death?

Say too — have *ye* been tried, and have ye failed?
Like us rebelled against the laws of Heaven?
By like temptation have ye been assailed?
Fallen like us — like *us* have been forgiven?

And has your ransom been as dearly earned?
The blood that flowed for *us* been shed for *you?*
Yet by the frenzy of your folly spurned,
Though given for all, atoned but for a few?

Or, have ye stood the trial? round your brow
Is the celestial palm of victory seen?
Foiled ye the tempter's art, and are ye now
As our first erring parents *might* have been?

Or, rising in the endless scale of things,
Boast ye a nature nearer to *divine?*
Soar your immortal forms on angel-wings?
Around your heads do heavenly halos shine?

Is yours the happiness *we* seek in vain?
Though here a phantom, is it substance there?
Mock your undying frames the touch of pain,
And your blest souls the keener pangs of care?

O! forms of life, unknown and undivined,
Why cheat the fancy, yet enchant the sight?
By thought undreamed, by reason undefined,
Why shroud in darkness all your blaze of light?

O could I mount on viewless wings of wind!
To your untravelled regions I would soar;
Leave the dull atmosphere of earth behind,
Trace all your wonders, and return no more!

Still as I gaze, new glories seem to rise,
Like books in unknown tongues when open spread,
Whose characters attract our wondering eyes,
Though doomed by mortals never to be read.

Comets! that sweep the heavens with fiery train,
And rush for countless years to frozen climes,
Then in the burning vortex plunge again —
While nations tremble, conscious of their crimes: —

Are ye too peopled? — ye provided too
With creatures fitted to each wide extreme?
Or do we see a living hell in you,
Worse than our wildest fancies dare to dream?

Ye too, ye Suns! each lessened to a speck!
By distance foiling fancy's grasp to scan,
Fair globes! yet doomed to share the general wreck,
And end with ours, as with it ye began:

Say, are your bright and burning orbs possest
By creatures pure and glorious as their sphere?
Are they th' appointed mansions of the blest,
For those who struggled and who triumphed here?

"Nature abhors a vacuum" — sages say,
There be whose nature ev'n *their* blaze endures;
Oh, then! how blest who bask in such a ray,
And bathe their spirits in a light like yours!

And is it so? is there no single spot
In all your concave's wide extended round,
Where reason does not glow — where light is not —
And where the Author's image is not found?

Speak, ye unfading lights that o'er me glow —
Bright copies of your Maker's brightness, speak!
If ever voice hath reached you from below,
Impart the awful knowledge which I seek.

Ye will not answer!—Science, which hath soared
Beyond the radiant orbits where ye roam,
Your moons hath numbered, and your laws explored,
Brings us no tidings of your *tenants* home.

And *you* — ye will not answer! and my eyes
Raised to your deaf and silent orbs in vain,
As all my soul were thirsting for replies —
Must seek, unsatisfied, low earth again.

Thou too, fair moon, our own attendant orb,
Shedding o'er night a charm unknown to day —
Doth darkness still *thy* nearer world absorb?
Wilt *thou* not listen to th' inquiring lay?

Perchance — for who can limit human powers?—
The time may come when telescopic skill —
Which brings within a ken as weak as ours —
Thy seas and clouds — the valley and the hill —

Points out volcanos — marks the rising flame —
Tracks its destructive course with critic art —
Gives to your oceans and your lands a name,
And sketches all their features in its chart —

May bring more hidden wonders to our view,
Show lofty cities rising on the sight,
Whose splendours mock what mortals ever knew,
And burst upon us in a blaze of light!

Or, if to arts and luxury unknown,
Wandering their unlost Eden's bowers among —
Show where, in ever-verdant arbours thrown,
Resound the lover's tale, the shepherd's song.

Vain hope! or vain at least in these our days ;—
The proud inquiry be pursued no more!
God *shows* enough to claim His creature's praise,
Man *sees* enough to tremble and adore.

Peace then, presumptuous mortal! nor aspire
To knowledge Heaven has wisely hid from view;
Nor deem, though granted were the vain desire,
The pleasure dreamed of would indeed ensue.

If bliss be theirs beyond what man can know,
Contrast would render suffering more severe ;
If their allotted portion is but woe,
We need not seek it there who feel it here!

THE ROSE AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

A Turkish Love-Song.

BY W. C. TAYLOR, LL.D.

My heart is a garden, and in it there grows
The pride of creation, a beautiful rose ;
My tears are the dew-drops that water its leaves ;
From my sighs as from breezes, new strength it receives ;
Its roots are struck deep, and its branches spread wide,
And its blossoms are waving abroad in their pride.

My spirit's a nightingale hovering around,
And breathing forth love in soft murmuring sound ;
'Tis fluttering, 'tis shrinking, 'tis trembling with fear,
For it dreads to alarm the young floweret so dear ;
To sip of such sweets it would change with the bee,
For that rose, dearest maid, is the emblem of Thee !

THE FAIR MINSTREL.

Favoured of Nature! thou to whom belong
The dangerous gifts of Beauty and of Song!
  Thy silver harp I love to see thee take,
While o'er the willing chords thy fingers stray
  Lightly and sweetly, as the Zephyrs wake
The music of the leaves at close of day.
  I love to see thee o'er it graceful bending,
  Thy voice the while its dulcet magic lending.
Mad that I am! my senses to resign
To thy Circean thraldom! O not mine
  The breast of adamant, that I should brave
Thy music and thy charms — the double spell
By which thou winnest the heart's citadel;
  And ah! — unpitying victor! — makest thy captive
    slave.

H.

THE TWO LIGHT-HOUSES.

A Tale of the Ocean.

BY THE OLD SAILOR.

"There is a Providence that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them as we will."

It is now some five-and-twenty years ago that I sported my naval uniform on board that pretty little brig of his majesty's, which was built by the shipwrights' apprentices of Deptford dock-yard, as a surveying vessel. She had a handsome bust of the great circumnavigator, Captain Cook, for a figure-head; and her stern was tastefully decorated with divers and sundry ornamental carved work, characteristic of the service on which she was to be engaged. There was only one fault in her construction,—she was too narrow for her length. The surveyor was a master in the navy, who had undergone many vicissitudes in life, and his memoirs might rival those celebrated details of Robinson Crusoe, which every school-boy loves to peruse.

Our first survey was between Lowestoft and Harwich; but as it would be tedious to mention many little curious circumstances that occurred during our operations, I shall confine myself to one, the narration of which interested me very much at the time, and I trust will not be wholly unwelcome to the reader.

Upon a projecting point of flat shingle on the coast of Suffolk, running far into the ocean, and forming the extreme point of the northern boundary of the estuary into which the river Thames empties its polluted waters, stand two light-houses, (nearly a mile apart from each other), for the double purpose of warning the mariner of his "whereabouts," and acting as correct guides to keep his vessel clear of shoals in this difficult and dangerous navigation. The one on the ever sea-beat point is termed the Low Light, and its overlooker more inland, is called the High Light. The former was an ancient erection with a small out-building attached: a few cart loads of mould had been carried thither, and attempts made to rear something like vegetation; but it was a fruitless effort, and except a cabbage or two which was at all times ready pickled by the spray of the sea, nothing would grow. All around, for a long distance, was loose shingle that yielded to the tread, and where the sea-fowl mingled their eggs with the pebbly stones, that formed a barrier against the inroads of the ocean, and protected the creek-like river which ran inside to a haven for small craft. Not a tree or a shrub of any kind appeared upon that stony bed, and the noise of the waves either

whispering in calm, or raging in storm, was never, never ceasing. It was a wild dreary spot on which the Low Light stood; and not unfrequently the tempestuous winds would raise the white frothy comb of the breakers, and scatter it nearly to the very summit of the building; then the saline particles, incrusting together, glistened brightly in the sun, and the old woman, who moved about on the beach regardless of wind or sea, obtaining a due portion for her share, might have well been compared to Lot's wife, for externally she exhibited a mass of salt.

The Upper Light was of more modern construction (the old one having been pulled down to give place for it), and it held its aspiring head above its humble neighbour, displaying its gorgeous illumination with a sort of patronage towards the venerable pile that bore the brunt of the storm;—but, like the grades in society, one was useless without the other. During our operation in taking angles, we had to measure a base-line between the two light-houses, and this led to an intimacy with their inhabitants, who perfectly corresponded in appearance and manners with the buildings they tenanted.

The Low Light had its bold hardy keeper, part fisherman, part pilot, part wrecker, and, (the truth must out), a dabbler in contraband; his wife in an old blue pea-jacket and a mob-cap, rendered ample assistance to her husband in each and all of his professions and callings; besides which, she was taster to the spirit trade, and could, in an instant, tell the degree of proof so as to be

enabled to increase the quantity by a reduction of its strength.

The High Light man was a small farmer, a little bit of a sailor, dressed like a gentleman on Sundays, and, with his *lady* and daughters, sat in a good seat at the church to show their finery. The girls were pretty, and, as a matter of course, I did a bit of the amiable towards the best looking; but one evening I detected her arm-in-arm with a rough smuggler-looking sort of a genius, in a frieze jacket; they parted hastily, and as the man passed me, I saw the countenance and large whiskers of the young Earl of ——, and from that time they had one *gull* less in the nest than usual, and I betook myself for my accustomed walk to the light-house at the point.

"You have a strange amphibious sort of a life of it here, Martin," said I, addressing the old man. "You are like the petrel, always in the storm. Are you not afraid that some night the light-house will get under way and carry you out to sea?"

"No master," replied he, "I've pretty good houlding ground, and though the ould building does sometimes shake in the could wind, yet it has weathered out many a gale; and I dare say will weather many more. Howsomever, it has made the fortun of some folks, though one of the former keepers was tried for murder."

"Indeed!" said I, ever hankering after the romantic; "how was that? Come, Martin, let me have

the particulars, I see you know them, and I dearly love a good yarn."

"Well, well, sir," answered he, "I dont mind if I do overhaul the consarn to you, seeing as I've got this net to piece, and hands and tongue can go at the same time. Sit down, sir; and dame, bring us out a drop of the right sort, full proof,—there's a darling ould soul! Why, you must see, sir,—but it's many years ago,—the two light-houses were inhabited by two brothers. David Bligh had this here, and Jonas Bligh had the t'other;—it's pulled down now, and a new one built."

But I shall take the liberty of departing from the idiom of the old man, and give the tale in language of my own.

The two Blighs were daring intrepid men, wholly regardless of danger, and utterly fearless in emergency; both were married and had families, but it was with difficulty that the parents could procure even a scanty subsistence for them. David was of a homely disposition, loved his wife and children, and, though the manner in which he added to the miserable pittance allowed him as keeper of the light, was not of the most reputable nature, yet he avoided evil company, and was never intoxicated, and endeavoured, to the best of his ability, to provide comforts for his home. Jonas, on the contrary, was the hardened villain, ill-using his wife, neglecting his offspring, drunken in his habits, and connected with a gang of smugglers, who as often perpetrated outrage

and depredation as they carried on the contraband, till at length he was engaged in a desperate affray which was very nearly proving of a murderous character, and after hiding in various places from time to time, he suddenly disappeared altogether, and no one knew what had become of him. The wife, or as it was more naturally supposed, the widow of Jonas, was permitted to remain in the light-house, and with the assistance of David, and the help of her eldest boy Richard, performed the necessary duties. David, however, had become a stricken man; first his wife, and then, one by one, his children died from him, till he had only a single child left, and she, a poor delicate creature, seemed totally unfit to encounter, much more endure the hardships of life; nevertheless, she did so, and grew up to be the fountain of comfort to her declining father, weaning him from the illegal traffic in which he had been so many years engaged, and drawing his attention to the christian's best hope, both in time and in eternity. Still there was ever a gloomy weight of oppression on the old man's mind,—a groaning of the inward spirit, as if some deed of former iniquity preyed upon his conscience; but as the music of his great namesake dispelled the evil visions of Saul, so did the smile or the song of Annie disperse the dark clouds which shaded her parent's countenance. The girl was not beautiful, but there was something in her look and manner, that was engaging, and there was a mildness in her expression that interested the heart's best and dearest affections.

Years passed away, and Annie was beloved by rival suitors: the one, the eldest son of the widow of Jonas, the other a handsome young seaman, belonging to a seventy-four that frequently anchored in the bay with the North Sea squadron, and, as he was one of the crew of the captain's gig, he had occasional opportunities of visiting the light-house. Of excellent character, and possessed of a better education than usually falls to the lot of the foremast man, Bill Brailwell was respected and valued by both officers and men. He it was that had encouraged a desire for information in young Annie's breast, and his scanty pay had supplied the means of instruction. Annie had been taught to read by her father; she tried to write,—practised it at every leisure moment, and the first epistle she ever penned was addressed to William, containing assurances of unalterable affection for the young seaman. Richard Bligh was kind and attentive to the object of his regard; he would have undergone any and every danger or privation to prove his attachment for her, but there was no corresponding feeling on her part. Annie knew that too many of the bad qualities of his father lurked within his breast; his passions were violent whenever his wishes were opposed, and he was bitter in his revenge when he imagined himself to be injured. That he ardently loved the girl there could not be a doubt; but there was a degree of ferocious selfishness in his love which would have prompted him to any desperate deed that promised a hope of calling her his own.

William's ship was paid off, and he was drafted into

a dashing frigate destined for the Mediterranean; he apprised Annie of the change, implored her to be firm and faithful to him, and declared that neither distance nor time should effect the smallest diminution in his honest affection. They might be separated for some time, but there were many chances of making prize-money, and he spoke of bright prospects of future happiness. Accompanying this was a letter to old David, with a post-office order for five pounds, and an exhortation for the father "to watch with tenderness over the treasure of his heart." Richard had seen these letters at the village post-office: the sight of them had mingled gall and wormwood in his mind, and he tried to get them into his possession, but his scheme failed, and they were forwarded to their proper destination. Poor Annie's heart sunk at the view of a long separation from William, and for a time she refused to be comforted. Richard ascertained the cause, and his mad chagrin was converted into a delirium of joy when he found the object of his hatred would be so far removed, and the being whom he loved in a great measure within his power. The secretly cherished hope that time and absence would operate with Annie, elevated his spirits, and he renewed his suit with redoubled ardour; but both father and daughter mildly, yet firmly discouraged his addresses, and in the madness of disappointment he swore to be revenged.

One evening, inflamed with liquor, Richard took advantage of old David's casual absence, and visited

the Lower Light. Annie was alone; there was no creature within hearing; the gulls were screaming their farewell to the sun as they wheeled their flight round the venerable pile; the winds were hushed, the waves scarce chattered on the beach,—all nature was tranquil. But unhallowed passion, heightened by intoxication, revelled unrestrained in the young man's breast. Annie saw the lawless flashing of his eye, and trembled; she would have shut herself in, but he came upon her before she could reach the building, and throwing his arms around her, he caught her to his bosom. Annie shrieked; but she was only answered by the wild noise of the sea-birds. She prayed, and her prayer ascended to the footstool of Omnipotence, for unusual strength was given her to escape, and rushing into the light-house, she ascended to the lantern gallery; thither too she was followed by her relentless persecutor, but the desperate girl mounting the railings, declared that she would precipitate herself to the bottom if he offered to approach her. Richard shuddered when he saw the danger she was in; it almost sobered him; the railing was shattered and frail, and as she stood it seemed as if the breath of an infant would destroy the balance, and hurl her to destruction. He implored her, he entreated her to come down, but she expressed herself more determined than ever to prefer a sudden death to a life of shame. He prayed her to forgive his base rashness, but the only answer he received was a peremptory order for him to quit the place. At this

moment the voice of old David was heard, chiding the dilatoriness of his child for not hastening to meet him. A laugh of excited delight rung upon the twilight sky, for Annie had caught the sound; her head grew dizzy; she balanced on her position for a moment, then preponderating outwards, she would have been dashed to pieces by the fall, but Richard darted forward with a sudden spring, caught her by her clothes, and she hung suspended in his grasp. Still he could not trust to the shattered barrier on which she had stood; he felt it giving way, and both would there have probably perished together, but for the timely aid of a stranger, who hearing the cry for help, had ascended to their assistance, and they were rescued. Richard immediately took his departure, for he would not meet the reproaches of the father, nor the anger of the child; he hurried from the scene, and with him went the stranger who had been instrumental in saving their lives. Annie was much bruised, and on the following day could scarcely move about; but her father did not leave the place, and with his presence she felt herself secure.

Evening returned again, — a beauteous summer's evening, — the sun was setting in gorgeous splendour, tinging every thing in nature with its golden hue. David sat at the door of the light-house mending his net, and revolving in his mind the circumstances which had so recently taken place; he mourned the depravity of the young man, and shrunk with sickly dread from contemplating the peril in which his child was placed.

He wondered who and what the stranger could be who had so mysteriously appeared at such an eventful crisis, and then disappeared as suddenly. Something darkened the old man's vision, and raising his head, the object of his thoughts stood before him; his arms were folded on his breast, his look was bent downward, and as his face was in the shade, his features could not be distinctly seen. A violent and unaccountable tremor shook old David's frame; he arose from his seat and was about to speak, but the stranger stepped on one side, and turned quickly round to face the west. The last red streaks of departing day glared upon his sallow countenance,—they gazed long and earnestly at each other, till sympathetic emotions arising from consanguinity prevailed, and "David!"—"Jonas!" was simultaneously uttered by the long separated brothers.

"Art from the dead?" exclaimed David, shuddering as he recollected he had worn a sable habit in remembrance of his decease.

"No, brother, I am yet amongst the living," replied Jonas, with solemnity; "and though long estranged from my family, I am now determined to do them justice; it is not necessary for me to detail the causes of my absence, nor the manner of my return; I come to demand the hand of Annie for my son."

There was a something commanding and superior in the mode of this short address that staggered David; but he mildly replied, "It may not be, brother, except with her own consent. Oh Jonas, Jonas! is your re-

appearance here to be the signal for renewed contention and persecution?"

"It is for you to determine that," rejoined the imperious brother; "Richard must have the girl, and that too without loss of time. I have most powerful reasons for this union, and if thwarted, can move the springs of vengeance to my purpose."

"That I am somewhat in your power, Jonas, I am well aware," returned the placid David, "but surely you must be fully sensible that the blow which prostrates me must also strike you down. Have you no feelings, Jonas—no lingering kindness of brotherhood?"

"Think you," replied Jonas, with a lowering look of contempt, "that long lingering years of captivity and sorrow have not wrung the blood of affection from my heart, and dried up all those sources of sweet fellowship that soften existence? Chains and the brand, and dungeons and stripes, are but poor stimulants to fond remembrance. Brother, they steel the breast—they destroy the bonds of relationship—they madden the intellect;" (and he glared wildly like a maniac) "they turn a heart of flesh into a heart of stone!"

"That you may have suffered wrong, Jonas, I can believe," argued David; "but that is no reason for your turning persecutor to your name and kindred. I have not brought injury or hurt upon you, but would rather relieve, than do aught to distress you; why then should you seek the downfall of me and mine?"

"I do not seek your downfall, David," answered

the determined brother; "I know that what I am about will prove a benefit to all. Richard must have the girl!"

"Then, Jonas, I defy you!" vociferated the old man, clenching his fist, and holding it erect; "though all the horrors which you may have suffered become my portion; though an ignominious end should seal my doom, I will not sacrifice the happiness of my child to purchase safety."

"Your child—ha, ha, ha!" and Jonas's laugh rung wildly in the void, "your child, indeed! now this is rank mockery. You know the girl is no more yours than she is mine, though you can best tell in what part of these shingles is the unhallowed grave that contains one who was, probably, her father."

A faint shriek was heard within the light-house—it was from Annie, who had been an involuntary listener to their conversation, and the last words had forced from her an exclamation of horror. David entered the building, and the poor girl fell at his knees; her pale face turned upwards to the old man, and her glaring eyes looking intently into his. "Is it true, father? is it true?" exclaimed she, imploringly. "Say, am I not your child?—tell me what fearful tale is this!"

"Annie—my own Annie!" returned the old man, his voice tremulous with anguish, and the hot tears falling upon her pallid cheeks. "Annie, my own Annie, hear me. I am a woe-stricken, heart-broken, and guilty man. There is my accuser—you are not—"

"Peace, fool!" roared Jonas, standing at the door; "would you destroy your only hope of safety? the time is not yet come. Leave her for the present; I have yet much to say to you;" and he walked away.

Old David moved to follow his mysterious relative, but Annie clung to him yet tighter. "Nay, father—dearest father! for the love of those that are gone, if not for mine, do not go with that dark, bad man; indeed, you must not quit me. Say that *I am* your child—no, no, your hand would never deprive a fellow-creature of existence."

Another wild laugh from Jonas was succeeded by heavy groans from the tortured breast of his brother. "Oh God!" said he, "depart not from thy servant in this hour of bitter trial." He paused a moment, and covering his face with his hands, seemed to pray inwardly; then looking at the prostrate girl, he exclaimed, "Rest quiet, my love, I shall *not* leave you. I will just go out and speak to this cruel wretch—but I will soon, very soon return."

He left the building, and the brothers walking to a spot on the point, out of hearing, (which Jonas seemed to have purposely selected) they held a secret communing together. Annie was too deeply interested in what had thus so strangely come to her knowledge, not to watch their proceedings. She saw the man called Jonas, vehemently urging some strong inducement on his aged relative; he pointed broad away upon the sea, and then at the upper light—he stamped his foot upon the shingly shore; he took up some of the stones

as if carefully to examine them, and then dashed them into the water. He paced to and fro, using gesticulations that betokened energy of manner, and though Annie could not catch one word that was uttered, she frequently heard his sonorous voice, and his wild unnatural laugh broke the solemn stillness of approaching night. Old David's actions were those of remonstrance and entreaty; but, at times, there was a determined firmness in his manner that betokened a resolute resistance; and thus Annie watched till their figures became gigantic in the gloom.

Darkness had overspread both land and ocean, when the brothers re-entered the light-house. "Annie, my love," said David, "this is the father of the young man, Richard, and he earnestly solicits your acceptance of his son;" and the old man stopped.

"And what does my father say?" inquired Annie, approaching David, and taking both his hands within her own.

"You have been a dutiful and a good girl, Annie," replied the venerable man, "the solace of my old age, and now—" he stopped again.

"What, father, what?" uttered she, looking in his face imploringly; "only say that I am your child, and Annie will do any thing to purchase a parent's peace and safety."

"I told you so," said Jonas; "the girl is reasonable, and would not let her father perish, when a small sacrifice might rescue him."

"May I not know what cause there is to fear?" in-

quired the shrinking girl; "tell me the danger, that I may judge for myself of the necessity of that which I would do."

"Your father's life is in jeopardy—one word from me, and an ignominious end upon the gallows would be his fate. Take Richard for your husband, and all will be well," replied Jonas.

"It is false!" exclaimed the excited maiden. "I will not believe it. Father, why do you not deny it, and if it is true, even the sacrifice you call upon me to make, would not protect us from a wretch who has no feelings of compassion."

"Your taunt is just, young woman," returned Jonas, harshly. "It is not alone the happiness of my son that I seek. I have deeper, stronger motives."

"They cannot be just or holy," pleaded the afflicted maiden, "or they would not urge me to break my pledge of fidelity to another."

"Whatever they are, they must for the present rest with myself," rejoined he, haughtily. "Your father's existence will become forfeited to the laws of your country, and you—what will become of you when cast upon the world?"

"Oh! would that William were here to counsel me in this grievous strait," uttered Annie, mournfully; but suddenly her eye lighted up; she gave the brother of her father a fierce look of contempt. "Oh! had he—had William been here, you would not thus have dared to pollute even this humble dwelling with your presence."

"You do well to brave it thus," replied the obdurate Jonas, and taking her arm, he led her to the door, and pointed to the stars. "Look," said he, "see those bright, sparkling orbs that gem the Almighty's throne. By them I swear—that if, by to-morrow's dawn, my requests are not complied with, you shall find my threats are not mere idle breath. I go now; think well of the prospect before you." He turned to depart.

"Stay, stay," said she, detaining him, and drawing him within the entrance, so as to front the grey-headed David. "Father, you heard him," uttered she calmly, but with firmness; "you heard him, and will you let him depart unanswered." The old man shuddered. "What, not one word of denial?—Father, dear father! it is Annie asks you what is this fearful thing which he threatens to reveal."

Jonas had looked on with a smile of demoniac pleasure, and when he heard the poor girl's appeal, he slowly uttered "Mur——" but he was not allowed to finish the word, for the strong grip of his brother was on his throat, as he vociferated, "Now, Jonas, thou liest." But Annie neither saw nor heard what followed—vivid imagination had completed what Jonas had begun, and she sunk senseless upon the floor. Then was there the unnatural spectacle of kindred struggling with kindred—a deadly vengeance burning at either heart; but David's physical strength was not equal to that of Jonas: with the former, the feelings of revenge passed quickly away. When he saw his prostrate child, his hold relaxed—he was dashed vio-

ently on the ground, and his persecutor stood erect.

"We part in bitter enmity, then," said the latter, in a hissing voice, between his grinding teeth.

"No, no, not so," returned the fallen man; "even now," and he looked at Annie by his side,—"ay, even now I can forgive you," but Jonas heard him not; he had hurried from the place.

David arose, and lifted up his unhappy child. "Are we alone, father?" said Annie, recovering; "has it been some horrible dream that tortured me?—Marry Richard, and forsake William to save my father from a fearful end? I have been sleeping—it is—"

"Partly true, my Annie," continued her father, pressing his lips upon her fair forehead; "but calm yourself, my child—he shall not have you, Annie,—not even death shall wring compliance from me."

"Oh, my father," exclaimed she, "tell me what was the import of those strange words: he said I was *not* your child, and you seemed to acquiesce; oh, relieve the agonized suspense of my wretched mind!"

"I cannot, at this moment, Annie," answered he; "I am not yet myself; passion has gained the mastery, but you shall soon know all. Have I not ever been an indulgent parent to you?—and will you doubt me now?"

"Oh, no, no," replied she, "I will not doubt: you have watched over my feeble infancy—you have—"

"Enough, enough, Annie," interrupted the old man, as he approached the staircase door; "I will ascend

and kindle the lights, which have been too long neglected; place my chair, girl, as you have been wont to do, and reach down your bible, that I may hear you read those psalms of David, in which he implores the mercy of the LORD."

Annie complied, and when her father descended, she read to him the 31st, and other psalms, till his mind grew apparently tranquil. Then he related to the poor girl many of the incidents of her early life, promising to reveal the whole on the morrow, and she sought her humble chamber; but she heard the door of the light-house opened, and from her little casement she saw her father go forth, and as he walked to and fro upon the beach, raising his hands imploringly to heaven, she became sensible that he was pouring forth the agony of his heart in fervent prayer. Annie knelt by her lowly pallet, and in earnest whisperings she offered up her fervent petitions to the throne of Grace.

Morning dawned—a bright and glorious morning; and the sun arose all red and beautiful, as if it had ascended from the coral caverns of the deep. And Annie looked out towards the ruins of the ancient castle in the village, and midway she saw the relentless Jonas approaching, accompanied by two men.

"Father!" called she to her aged parent, as he stood in the gallery, extinguishing the lights; "father, they are coming—they are coming—hasten to escape, or tell me what I can do to save you."

"No, my child," returned the grey-headed sire, as he met the fair girl in the lower apartment, "I will

not shrink from the path of duty. A mightier hand than mine hath ordered this, and to its dispensations will I bend. Come hither, Annie, and take an old man's blessing ere we part."

"Oh, say not so, my father," replied the weeping girl, "wherever they may take you, I will follow, and share your lot." She knelt at the old man's feet; he placed his hands upon her head, his lips moved noiselessly, for the voice was in the heart.

The inexorable Jonas entered alone. "What is your decision?" inquired he, with well-assumed calmness.

"Will nothing but the destruction of one or both, content you?" said David, as he raised Annie from her humble posture.

"I offer you safety, not destruction," returned the other: "if you reject the former, the latter is of your own seeking. You know the conditions."

"I do, Jonas, I do! and spurn them," answered David, firmly. "This ould body must soon be laid in the grave, but she has many years to live, and do you think that it would be worth the few days that may be yet spared to me—days of sorrow at the best—do you think they would be worth purchasing by the irretrievable misery, in which she must be plunged through falsifying her vow, and marrying one whom she could never love?"

"This is second childhood," returned Jonas; "you are getting in your dotage to talk of romantic love.

But let me hear *you*, young woman," turning to Annie, "what have you determined on?"

"To follow the counsel of my father," replied she, boldly. "I put my trust in God; he will deliver us from this evil."

"Fools! rash, headstrong fools!' vociferated Jonas, as he ground his feet upon the floor, while every limb shook with convulsive energy; "you force me to the deed; the officers of justice are waiting a short distance off, and only need my beck to lead one away a prisoner, and make a wretched outcast of the other; they will not tarry long even for me. Speak then, speak quickly!" and his earnestness arose to agony,—"save yourself, old man!—Annie!" His voice became tremulous, with emotion; "Annie, will you suffer those grey hairs to be exposed upon a scaffold to the gaze of thousands? Will you madly place a rope upon the neck round which your arms have so fondly clung?" He paused, but both, though dreadfully agitated, continued silent. "Fools! mad fools!—know you not that the charge is murder?"

"Ay, is it indeed so?" exclaimed one of the officers, entering, and producing a horse pistol, "I suspected there was something more than a matter of smuggling or poaching, though in his lordship's estimation I arn't quite sure but poaching is worse than murder; howsomever, I was right in my suspicion,—and Ned," he added, addressing his comrade; "you see I've listened to some purpose; come, where's the darbies?"

"Great God, this is too horrible!" exclaimed Jonas, covering his eyes with his hand, and speaking audibly to himself, "I did not mean it to go thus far—intimidation was all that I intended; and now—"

"You're caught in your own trap, my man," added the officer, finishing the sentence as he locked the handcuffs upon the wrists of the unresisting David, "Ned, hand over t'other pair;"—the assistant gave him the securities: "and now, Mr. Jonas, you see we happens to know you, for all your disguise—just hold out your mawleys, for I must put the bracelets upon you both."

"Upon me, fellow!" returned Jonas, haughtily, and preparing for resistance, "dare to lay a finger upon me, and I'll prosecute you with the utmost rigour of the law."

"Whew!" whistled the man, with the utmost unconcern, "here's pretty waste of a tragedy speech. But come, sir, take it quietly; and don't put me to the unpleasant necessity of being uncivil; you may go to law afterwards, but take my word for it, I shall secure you now, either dead or alive. You are, perhaps, an *accomplish* in the murder. You know what I mean—so I shall kill two birds with one stone."

Jonas saw, in an instant, the awkward position in which his reckless impatience had placed him, and making a determined spring for the door, he knocked down the officer, but was himself instantly prostrated by a blow from the staff of his assistant, Ned; the handcuffs were clapped upon him, and he was a prisoner. They quitted the light-house, and Annie lock-

ing the door, hastened to support the steps of her wretched father. The brothers were kept apart during their walk to the magistrates, where they underwent a private examination; the result was, the committal of David on a charge of murder, and the detention of Jonas for want of securities to give evidence.

It happened to be within only two days of the assizes for the county, and on the third day from the period of his arrest, David was placed at the bar, to be tried for his life. Jonas had been promised indemnity for himself, if he would reveal the truth, and the narrow-minded villain, regardless of consequences to his unhappy relative, saw only the prospect of Annie being thrown into his power, and compelled to a union which she hated. The circumstance of one brother appearing against another for a crime involved in considerable mystery, drew together a crowded court; and when the venerable man held up his horny hand, above a head whitened by the snows of age, a strong feeling of commiseration pervaded every breast, which was not lessened by the deep tone of his voice, as he solemnly pleaded "Not guilty, my lord;" and many a fervent prayer was breathed to heaven that his asseveration might be true.

A death-like stillness prevailed when the counsel for the crown opened the charge; breathless attention sat on every countenance as he proceeded, and when he closed his address to the jury, a look of sickly apprehension was manifest among the crowd, and every eye seemed as if trying to catch a neighbour's thoughts.

From this speech, which it is unnecessary to repeat, the court became aware that "the prisoner was indicted for having, on a certain day, about eighteen years previous, murdered an unfortunate stranger who had been cast ashore from a wreck at the same time with an infant child—that he had possessed himself of valuable property belonging by right of law to the lord of the manor; and that the girl named Annie Bligh, was the child then saved."

The first witness called was Jonas Bligh, who gave the following evidence:

On the night in question he was engaged with a gang of smugglers running a cargo across the beach into the haven, and went to the lower light-house to obtain his brother's assistance. There had been a heavy gale of wind, and it still blew fresh from the eastward, with a full sea running into the bay. He had found David on the point, dragging ashore a large piece of wreck that almost mastered him, but with the help of witness, they succeeded in getting it up; it seemed to be part of a vessel's bows, with the forecastle still remaining, and, lashed to the timbers, was the body of a man, a small chest, and other luggage, and loose upon the shattered piece of deck, a noble Newfoundland dog. They attempted to remove the articles, but the dog would not allow them to be touched; they laid the body on the beach, and life was not extinct; the heart beat, for he held his hand upon it, and there was pulsation at the wrist. As the tide was flowing, it was necessary to keep hauling the

wreck in shore to prevent its being carried away; but their united strength was not sufficient to effect this, and Jonas quitted his brother to procure the aid of one of the gang. But Jonas had been drinking, and the liquor had nearly over-powered him; so that some time elapsed before his return, and then he found the wreck had drifted away. David was in the light-house, and his wife chafing the limbs of an infant, apparently about nine months old. He stated, that finding he could not hold on, at the risk of his life he had cut the chest adrift, and got it ashore. Without waiting for any one to arrive, he had, in the presence of his wife, broke open the lid, and found the infant then under process of resuscitation. Astonished at the occurrence, he remained a short time, and then hurried to where he left the body, but wreck, and dog, and man were gone! "This," continued the witness, "was all that I could get out of him; he swore that he had obtained no plunder; but from that time his condition was bettered, and he became an altered man."

"What further testimony can you give?" inquired the counsel; "remember the solemn obligation of your oath, and conceal nothing. Where did you first go to when you returned with your companion?"

"To the spot upon the point, where I had left the prisoner," replied the witness.

"And did you perceive nothing extraordinary?" asked the counsel.

"I was groping about the shingle where the body

had lain, and fell," returned the witness, "that is slipped down."

"Well, and what then?" continued the counsel, evidently aiming at some particular point.

"On getting up, I observed a dark patch upon my frock," reluctantly replied Jonas, "and it was wet."

"Was the night light or gloomy?" interrupted the judge.

"Dark, very dark, my lord," replied the man under examination, "there was not a star to be seen."

"And do you pretend that you could distinguish a stain?—for that is I suppose what is meant; do you pretend to tell the jury that, on so dark a night, and yourself not sober, you could see a mark on your frock?" interrogated the judge, with some asperity.

A murmur of approbation was for an instant buzzed among the crowd—hearts beat quicker, and more joyous—hope, for a moment, irradiated many a face, but all was heavily crushed, when the witness answered "The light-house, my lord; we were full in its brightest glare."

The judge was silenced, and the counsel proceeded.

"Now, tell his lordship and the jury, what were those marks that appeared upon your frock."

The answer was anticipated by the court,—judge, jury, and spectators knew there could be no other; yet, when the witness solemnly answered, "Blood," a thrill of horror went through every soul, and all eyes were bent upon the hoary-headed prisoner.

"That is all I have to ask him for the present, my lord," said the counsel for the prosecution, addressing the bench.

"Is the prisoner defended?" inquired the judge; and the simple, but important monosyllable "No!" was returned. "Then, prisoner, it is my duty to ask you whether you have any questions to put to the witness?"

Deep attention was drawn to the aged man, and expectation was alive that something would be elicited in cross-examination, but this was changed to grievous disappointment when David calmly replied, "None, my lord—he has spoken the truth."

The next witness was called—the smuggler who had accompanied Jonas to the Point. He deposed to that fact, and corroborated the evidence of his predecessor relative to the marks of blood, as in raising up his comrade, a portion of the stains had been imparted to himself; moreover, he had found a large clasp knife;" (a thrilling shudder went though the crowd) "and it lay right in a pool of blood."

"What became of that knife?" inquired the prosecuting counsel.

"I buried it," returned the man, "but may I proceed in my own way—there is something to be told before I come to that."

"Proceed," said the judge, "but do not wander from the point—tell us where you buried the knife."

"I will, my lord," answered the witness, and then continued, "I left Jonas Bligh at the light-house, and

returned to the gang, and when we had worked the crop—"

"What do you mean by working the crop?" inquired the judge, "speak plainly, man."

"My lord," said the counsel, modestly, "I presume he means that they had carried off and secured their illicit cargo—is it not so, witness?"

"Yes, sir," replied the smuggler, "and when we had worked the crop, I returned to the Low Light, determined to watch what David would do. Jonas was gone, and in about an hour, I saw the prisoner come stealthily out, and he went some distance above high water mark, and raised a dead body on his shoulder." A half suppressed groan was uttered by the audience, and every look was bent upon the old man to see what effect this testimony would produce. To the surprise of all, there was a smile upon his features, but it vanished in a moment, and calmness, as before, overspread his countenance. The witness continued: "I should have told you that when he first came out, he went to the palings of the garden, and took something over which he carried in his hand. I could not then tell what it was, but I followed him, about midway to the upper light, where he threw the body down, and by his digging I knew it was a spade. Then, my lord, amid the howling of the gale, he formed a grave for the murdered man, and when he had finished, I heard the body fall heavily into it; he then filled it up, and went away."

"This place has been examined, brother C——, I

suppose," said the judge, "and we shall have full evidence of the fact?"

"No, my lord," returned the counsel, evidently surprised, "this is the first I ever have heard of the matter;" he turned and whispered to some one immediately behind him,—"even the attorney for the prosecution, my lord, was totally unprepared for this—it is all new and unexpected."

"But it is most important to the cause of justice," added his lordship. "Attend, witness,—Have you ever visited that spot since?"

"No, my lord," replied the man, "but I went to it when David was gone, and took my bearings, so that I might find it again."

"You do not know, then, whether it has ever been disturbed since?" inquired the judge.

"It has never been touched by me, or any one, from that hour to this," observed the prisoner, in a quiet, subdued tone.

"You had better remain silent, prisoner," said the judge; "your words are tantamount to a confession, and yet you have pleaded not guilty." David bowed, and the judge turning to the witness, asked, "Do you think you could point out the place if you were there?"

"I could readily, my lord," asserted the witness, "and, moreover, it was there I buried the knife."

"This is, really, a matter of much moment," said the judge, and turning to an official personage by his side, he continued, "Mr. High Sheriff, let some re-

sponsible person accompany the witness as soon as his examination is over, and have the place properly searched. Proceed, Mr. C——."

The counsel bowed, and inquired, "Was there any blood near the grave?"

"There was," returned the man, "for I carried some of the shingle away with me, and looking at it next morning, I found that many of the stones were stained."

"What sort of a knife was it?" asked the counsel, "describe it to his lordship and the jury, to the best of your recollection."

"It was a large clasp knife," answered the witness, "such as is generally used by seamen." One was handed to him for his inspection, which caught the eye of the prisoner, who looked eagerly at it, and finding that the witness did not immediately answer, exclaimed—

"My lord, it was the very fellow-knife to that, but rather broader at the end, and it had a laniard."

"You make strange admissions, prisoner," remonstrated his lordship; "you had better take my advice, and remain silent." David bowed again. "Pray," inquired he of the witness, "did the knife you mention have what the prisoner calls a laniard to it?"

"It had, my lord," answered the man, "and I cut off part of it, which I put in clear water, which it tinged deeply with the colour of blood."

"Pray how is it that you never went to the place since, or gave any information?" inquired the judge.

"I sailed across the water the next day, my lord, to Flushing," returned the witness, "and was away two or three years."

"But when you returned," continued his lordship, "did not the voice of a brother's blood cry aloud for vengeance?—where was your conscience?"

"I did not remain in England long, my lord," answered he, "circumstances obliged me to quit it for a time."

"That is," said the prisoner, quietly, "you were apprehended a few hours after you landed—were tried, and sentenced to fourteen years' transportation, for a burglary."

The excitement produced by this charge was very great; a buzz went through the audience, and it was not till the crier of the court had repeatedly called silence, that order was perfectly restored. From some cause or other, the judge did not check it, but as soon as quiet resumed its reign, he turned to the witness, "How, sir? is it as the prisoner has stated?"

"It is, my lord," replied the witness, "I committed the crime, and I suffered the punishment."

"Would your lordship be pleased to ask him where he came from now?" said David, addressing the judge.

"Certainly, prisoner," replied his lordship, "I suppose you mean the place he has come from to give evidence?" David bent his head in token of acquiescence. "You have heard the question, witness," said the judge, "now answer it."

"I came from the jail, my lord," replied the man, and another strong sensation excited the spectators.

"My lord," said the counsel, rising, "I will readily admit that the witness is not untainted—he is now in custody on a charge of felony; the last witness and the prisoner were in the same jail with him; a recognition took place, and as in murder cases, we are glad of any testimony to bring the perpetrator to justice, we availed ourselves of his evidence. I have no more questions to ask the witness."

Strongly escorted, and accompanied by the under-sheriff, the witness was despatched, in a chaise-and-four, to point out the grave of the murdered victim, and the remainder of the trial was postponed till their return. Another case was called on, and the excitement of the audience soon ran into a different channel.

On the following morning, David was again placed at the bar, but affairs were changed with him since the previous day. An eminent counsel was engaged in his behalf, and Annie was permitted to sit in the court where she could see the aged prisoner, who had been so long to her as a father. On one side of her was a young naval officer, in the uniform of master's mate, who was accompanied by a seaman, in the usual dress; and on the other side of her sat an elderly gentleman, who, by his manners and appearance, was considered to be a foreigner. David smiled upon the fair girl,—for she was the only soul he knew in that vast assembly—and she returned his smile with one of placid sweet-

ness, that beamed with delight upon the old man's heart.

At length the witnesses were called, and the under sheriff ascended the box, who, as soon as he was sworn, gave the following evidence:

"Upon arriving at the ness, it was still daylight, and the man vainly endeavoured to find the spot, but as soon as darkness had closed in, and the lights were lit, he, without hesitation, placed himself upon it. At daylight that morning, they commenced their search, and after digging about two feet down, a knife was thrown up," he drew it from his pocket, and held it up to the horrified view of the court, and then passed it to the jury; "part of the laniard had been cut off, and it seemed to be crusted with blood. About six feet below the surface we came to the body—" a convulsive hissing, and quick respiration in the court followed this announcement of the discovery of the victim, and the witness paused.

"Go on, sir," said the judge, his feelings unusually excited.

The witness was still silent, whilst he was endeavouring to untie the knot of a silk handkerchief, apparently containing something of importance to the testimony he was about to give, "We found the body," reiterated he, and again stopped.

"Why dont you tell his lordship," said the prisoner, in a tone of restless disquietude, "you found the body of a DEAD DOG!"

The sudden change from the horrible to something

like the ludicrous, produced a burst of hysterical laughter from the females, which was instantly checked by the judge, who, addressing the witness said, "Proceed, sir,—was it nothing more than a dog that you found?"

"No, my lord," returned the under sheriff, "it was the dead body of a monstrous dog, and this, my lord," taking a large collar from the handkerchief, "was on its neck. We searched in every direction but could find nothing more."

"This affair seems to be involved in much mystery," said his lordship, "and at present I see nothing to go to the jury—however, proceed."

"My case is closed, my lord," said the counsel for the prosecution, rising up, and facing the bench.

"Well, brother C——, and what is there to go to the jury?" asked his lordship, "A body is seen, and it disappears: there is no evidence to say in what manner—true, there is blood, the blood of some one, but no person saw the deed perpetrated; nor is it, indeed, absolutely essential to conviction that there should be where the corpse of the murdered is discovered—but here there is no proof whatever that life has been taken, for the victim is never seen afterwards."

"I am certain your lordship does not mean to say that under all cases of trial for murder the body must previously be found to insure conviction," argued the learned counsel, "for supposing, my lord, two men at sea, and the one in malice prepense, strikes the other

overboard, so that he is drowned, and the body sinks to rise no more—"

"In such a case, brother, the very act itself is sufficient, if a third party is witness to the blow," interrupted the judge.

"My lord," said the counsel for the prisoner, "I have hitherto remained silent, as I would not obtrude myself impertinently; but I assure you, my lord, I have an undeniable answer to the case. I will with ease refute the charge, as soon as my aged client has closed his defence—a charge, my lord, based on villany and fraud. I should feel grateful to your lordship to let the trial proceed, that the old man's grey hairs may not go down dishonoured to his grave."

"It shall be so," said the judge; "Prisoner, the time has now arrived for you to make your defence."

Old David bowed to his lordship and the jury, smoothed down the silvery locks on his forehead, then laying his hands on the front of the dock, he gave a look of mingled emotion at Annie, and began:

"My lord," said he, "I am not going to plead the frailty of human nature in extenuation of crime, though 'I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;' yet, my lord, when a man is steeped in poverty, and sees his offspring,—his own flesh and blood, crying for the food which he has not to give, sore is the temptation if the red gold comes within his grasp, and avarice tells him there is no eye abroad to witness the transaction. My unhappy brother has truly stated that he assisted me to haul the

piece of wreck on shore. It was a dark and fearful night, my lord, and whilst he was away to collect more strength, I cut adrift some of the luggage, and my hand grasped a canvass bag which spoke in a language all can understand; there was the clattering and ringing of money, and cold, hungry, and wretched as I was, I thought of my famishing children, and my very heart laughed with joy. I placed it in my breast, —ay, next my skin,—for I feared to part with it again, —and it seemed to throw me into fever, it scorched up my feelings of humanity, and when I approached the man who yet lived, my knife was in my hand,— he might recover and claim the gold, and my boys and girls —— O God! the desperate maddened agony of that moment!" The old man bowed his head, and groaned heavily, and every eye in the crowded court showed symptoms of intense commisseration. "I've said, my lord," continued he, as soon as he had gained more composure, "my knife was in my hand, for I had been cutting away the lashings of the small chest, and other things, — and I grasped the man, — but the dog who had stood unmoved till then, suddenly flew upon me, and seized me by the arm; at first he merely made me feel that he *had* teeth, but when he found that I persisted, he bit deeply, and would not quit his hold. I rose up, but he still held me fast till I drew my knife across his throat,—it was sharp, my lord,—desperation had made me powerful, and the faithful animal lay dead at my feet. I feared to let the tide carry him away, as that might lead to detection, and I equally feared

for Jonas to see him, lest he might suspect the cause; so I dragged the carcase to some distance round the point above high water mark, and left it. On my return to the wreck, I found it had drifted higher up the bay; I followed, and secured the small chest which, with some light articles, I carried to my dwelling. Humanity began to resume its dominion over me; I thought of the man upon the beach, and took the old woman with me to aid in bringing him to the light-house; but on reaching the surf, I found the tide had partly flowed over the spot, and the body was gone. We searched along the beach, but could no where find it, and we hastened back to the light-house to examine the booty we had secured. The chest, though small, was very stout, and covered in every part with tarpaulin; yet a blow from my axe split the lid, which we removed, and there, wrapped up in linen, but with the face and hands exposed, lay what we then thought, was a dead infant. There was, however, blood on one of the arms, from a cut caused by the axe,—she has the scar now. Annie, my love," said the aged prisoner, addressing the weeping maiden, "Annie, show it to his lordship." In an instant all eyes were directed to the spot where the humble girl was seated, but she instantly arose, bared her arm, and the place was visible to both judge and jury. "Well, my lord, seeing the blood, my dame chafed the child's limbs, and it revived just as Jonas came back. He taxed me with defrauding him of his share, and swore that I had murdered the man. He had stained

himself with blood,—the blood of the slaughtered dog, my lord, which I had buried as has been described. I kept the money to myself, but from that hour the hand of the Almighty was heavy upon me, and my moisture was turned into the drought of summer,—my wife and children were called away till I had none but the stranger left in my house. Years of bitter repentance have rolled over my head since then; my life was spent in grief, and my days in sighing; my strength failed me because of mine iniquity. I was haunted by the thoughts of that shipwrecked man who came alive to shore,—to British land,—and yet was cruelly suffered to perish."

"Avast!—avast, heave and pawl there!" shouted the seaman who sat near Annie, "he didn't perish not by no manner o' means, for here I am d'ye mind, all alive and kicking, my hearty."

This sudden exclamation, vociferated with all the honest warmth of a tar, produced the most heart-stirring commotion, and from a stillness that was almost startling, there was utter confusion in the court which was greatly increased by the bawling of the officials, commanding "silence." At length, order was restored, David's defence was closed without any mention of the motives that stimulated Jonas to vengeance, and the counsel for the prisoner called Jack Binnacle into the box. Jack deposed that he had been a seaman in a Dutch Guineaman that had broke from her moorings in the Downs, and, during the gale, had struck upon the Long Sand, but was knocked over it with the

loss of her masts and rudder. She then drifted into deep water till she tailed upon the Galloper, where she stuck fast and went to pieces; every soul except himself and the child—who belonged to a lady passenger—perished. He it was who secured the chest and the valuables, and when they floated away on the piece of the wreck, he had kept perfectly sensible till a short time before reaching the shore, when benumbed by the cold, he sunk into helpless weakness, but his senses did not altogether forsake him; he was in some measure aware of what was going on, and during the absence of David, he so far recovered as to raise himself and crawl away over the bank. To this, he was prompted by a double motive; he was apprehensive that he should share the fate of the dog, and he likewise was desirous of making off with a good cargo of doubloons which he had stowed about his person, and which he might probably be called on to account for, if the fact should become known. At all events, he got clear off, spent his ill-gotten wealth, and was pressed into his majesty's service,—had been watchmate with Brailwell in the frigate up the Mediterranean, and one first watch, during conversation, the subject of the wreck was broached; it led to further explanations, and the anxious lover had no doubt that the father of Annie was the person implicated. For a gallant action in cutting out a felucca and general good conduct, William had been promoted to the quarter-deck, and Mr. Brailwell, the young officer by Annie's side, was master's mate of his majesty's ship ——. On their

return to England, both obtained leave of absence, (William becoming responsible for his shipmate's re-appearance), and hastened to the ness, where learning what had taken place, they immediately set out again, and had only arrived the previous evening.

"The hand of Providence does indeed seem to have been wonderfully displayed here," said the judge with pleased solemnity.

"But your lordship is not yet aware of the full extent," uttered the counsel for the prisoner, "nor should I introduce the subject here, but that villany may meet its due. I will not take up much of your lordship's time. Have I your permission to proceed?"

Curiosity will at times overcome every child of Adam,—even the grave judges of the land are subject to it. His lordship assented if it would not occupy much of the public's time.

"My lord," said the counsel, "the brother of the prisoner, — the first witness in this case, — was driven from the country for his rogueries, and after tossing about in various parts of the world, he was at last located at one of the Dutch settlements on the coast of Africa, in the service of a wealthy merchant, whose wife and children perished at sea, or in other words, the only intelligence heard of the ship, was her driving from the Downs during a heavy gale of wind without a pilot, and parts of her frame came ashore in Hosley Bay, and cases, trunks, even one of the boats, were picked up near Landguard Fort, at the entrance to Harwich. The date corresponded exactly with that on

which the event occurred that brought yon old man to the bar, and revolving every circumstance in his mind, the outcast felt convinced that Annie was the daughter of his wealthy master. They landed in this country about ten days ago, and Jonas Bligh persuaded his employer to let him take a journey to the ness in order to make inquiry,—having communicated only just so much as was calculated to stimulate the father's mind. For a day or two he remained in secret prosecuting his research till he became satisfied of the accuracy of his anticipations, and then making himself known to the prisoner, he demanded the girl for his son in marriage; but finding the suit was refused, he resorted to intimidation; this also failed, and then revenge prompted him to become the double-dipped villain that he is. You, my lord, must see his motive for this marriage, and I shall say no more about it. He was taken into custody and detained, and his master hearing nothing from him, arrived last evening in his progress to the ness, and put up at the same inn with our gallant young friend here. The trial was the all engrossing topic. By those accidents which frequently happen in public rooms, the parties fell into acquaintance; explanations ensued,—and need I tell the rest my lord? This good girl," and he took Annie's hand, "found her real father, who is now sitting beside her; and if any doubt had remained, it was removed this morning by the production of the dog's collar, having on it the name of the gentleman himself."

A thundering, irrepressible burst of applause,—the unrestrained voice of nature itself,—shook the very building :—the judge arose and waved his hand to command silence, but fell back overpowered in his seat. David, who before knew nothing of all this, uttered a deep groan, and sank within the dock; and several minutes elapsed before tranquillity was restored. The judge directed the acquittal of the prisoner, who was discharged from custody aud received in the arms of his friends.

"And now," added old Martin, "what do you think of my tale of The Two Lighthouses?"

"Excellent, my friend, most excellent," answered I. "But what became of the parties afterwards?"

He threw down his net, and rose up as he replied, "Annie and Brailwell were married, and he lived to be a post captain. David left the light-house to reside with Annie's father. Richard went to sea, and never was heard of again. Jack Binnacle died in Greenwich Hospital——"

"And Jonas?" inquired I, impatiently interrupting him. "What became of the scoundrel Jonas?"

The veteran looked hard in my face as he answered, "Jonas?—Why, sir, Jonas was buried in a four-cross-road."

THE SCYTHIAN GRAVE.

The following stanzas refer to some very elegant and affecting customs of the Scythians, as avouched by Herodotus, (Melpomene, 71.) relative to the burial of their kings,* round whose tombs they were wont to set up a troop of fifty skeleton scarecrows—armed corpses—in a manner very horrible, barbarous, and indecorous; besides sending out of the world, to keep the king company, numerous cup-bearers, grooms, lackeys, coachmen, and cooks; all which singular, and, to the individuals concerned, somewhat objectionable proceedings, appear to have been the result of a feeling, pervading the whole nation, of the poetical and picturesque.

I.

They laid the lord
Of all the land
Within his grave of pride;
They set the sword
Beside the hand
That could not grasp, nor guide:
They left, to soothe and share his rest
Beneath the moveless mould,
A lady, bright as those that live,
But oh, how calm and cold!

* These are the kings to whom the Prophecies in the Old Testament refer, "They shall go down to the grave with their weapons of war, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living."

They left, to keep due watch and ward,
Thick vassals round their slumbering lord —
Ranged in menial order all —
They may hear, when *he* can call.

II.

They built a mound
Above the breast
Whose haughty heart was still ;
Each stormy sound
That wakes the west,
Howls o'er that lonely hill.
Underneath, an armed troop
In stalwart order stay :
Flank to flank they stand, nor stoop
Their lances, day by day,
Round the dim sepulchral cliff
Horsemen fifty, fixed and stiff —
Each with his bow, and each with his brand,
With his bridle grasped in his steadfast hand.

III.

The soul of sleep
May dim the brow,
And check the soldiers' tread ;
But who can keep
A guard so true,
As do the dark-eyed dead ?

The foul hyenas howl and haunt
About their charnel lair;
The flickering rags of flesh, they flaunt,
Within the plague-struck air.
But still the skulls do gaze and grin,
Though the worms have gnawed the nerves within,
And the jointed toes, and the fleshless heel
Clatter and clank in their stirrup of steel.

IV.

The snows are swift
That glide so pale
Along the mountain dim;
Beneath their drift
Shall rust the mail,
And blanch the nerveless limb:
While shower on shower, and wreath on wreath,
From vapours thunder-scarred,*
Surround the misty mound of death,
And whelm its ghastly guard;
Till those who held the earth in fear,
Lie meek, and mild, and powerless here,
Without a single sworded slave
To keep their name, or guard their grave.

J. R.

Christ Church, Oxon.

* It is one of the peculiarities of the climate, according to Herodotus, that it thunders in the winter, not in the summer.

REMEMBRANCE.

I OUGHT to be joyful, the jest and the song
And the light tones of music resound through the throng;
But its cadence falls dully and dead on my ear,
And the laughter I mimic is quenched in a tear.

For here are no longer, to bid me rejoice,
The light of thy smile, or the tone of thy voice,
And, gay though the crowd that's around me may be,
I am alone, when I'm parted from thee.

Alone, said I, dearest? O, never we part,—
For ever, for ever, thou'rt here in my heart;
Sleeping or waking, where'er I may be,
I have but one thought, and that thought is of thee.

When the planets roll red through the darkness of night,
When the morning bedews all the landscape with light,
When the high sun of noon-day is warm on the hill,
And the breezes are quiet, the green leafage still;

I love to look out o'er the earth and the sky,
For nature is kind, and seems lonely, as I;
Whatever in nature most lovely I see,
Has a voice that recalls the remembrance of thee.

Remember — remember. — Those only can know
How dear is remembrance, whose hope is laid low;
'Tis like clouds in the west, that are gorgeous still,
When the dank dews of evening fall deadly and chill;

Like the bow in the cloud that is painted so bright, —
Like the voice of the nightingale, heard through the night,
Oh, sweet is remembrance, most sad though it be,
For remembrance is all that remaineth for me.

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THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Harp of soft melody, when silent sitting,
I strive to lift my thoughts from worldly things,
I love to hear the gales of evening flitting
In low awakening murmurs o'er thy strings.

No hand is nigh — again the breezes tremble,
Imparting to thy heavenly music birth;
Would that my feeble heart could thee resemble,
Yielding no answer to the spells of earth!

Would that, by human lures and hearts unshaken,
My spirit thus from thraldom could arise;
Resist the power of man its depths to waken,
And only give its breathings to the skies.

Painted by C. Stanfield, R.A.

Engraved by [illegible]

TORCELLO.

TORCELLO.

The evening of the 23rd of April, 1797, will be long remembered in Venice, as the commencement of those hostilities which determined the fall of the most ancient republic of Europe. On that evening, Charles Montague had arrived in the city of palaces, with despatches to the British envoy. In the vigour of life, just five-and-twenty, a captain of cavalry, and in prospect of a handsome estate, life was to him all *couleur de rose*. Italy had long attracted all eyes. Napoleon's brilliant battles inflamed his young soldiership, and he regarded it as one of the brightest days that ever dawned on his gay existence, when a relative in the foreign office offered him the opportunity of seeing Italy, whether in flood or flame, by charging himself with half-a-dozen routine letters for his Britannic majesty's legation at Venice.

After traversing the country with extreme difficulty, and some rather delicate escapes from the French hussars, he had made his way to the hotel of the embassy, tired, waysore, but in the highest state of animation, mental and bodily.

"What news?" was the anxious envoy, Sir Edward Wilmot's, first question.

"Capital," was the answer. "The war has broken out again. The French columns, under Victor and Kellerman, are moving full speed on the Brenta,—at least thirty thousand men. They will be within cannon-shot of us by to-morrow night. And as for myself, within these twelve hours, I have walked, rode, and run, half a hundred miles, and have seen a first-rate skirmish besides."

"Why, captain, I must acknowledge, you seem to have made the most of your day," observed the envoy, gravely. "Then the old republic goes. I regret that so little time can be allowed for the hospitalities of the embassy. If the French come, the 'Sauve qui peut,' will be the order of the day here."

"Well, we must take the world as it comes," said Montague, laughingly; "if the Sansculottes make their way to the city, we shall have something to do. If they turn off, we shall have something to see. In both ways, we gain. But, on the whole, I think Venice will be able to beat them."

"Yes. If old men in the field, and old women in the council, can supply the place of generals and statesmen," said the envoy, with increasing gravity.

An attendant here entered, to announce that dinner was on the table, and Montague, hungry and parched by a journey in the glow of an Italian sun, gave way to the envoy's polite pressure with remarkably good will. Several of the attachés and some Italian men of

rank joined the party; the table was full, and he owned to himself, as he looked round on the showy apartment, decorated as it was with Italian luxury, and on the lively party, in whose conversation all the novelty, oddity, and not a little of the scandal, of the city came out with foreign freedom—that, amusing as it might be to be galloping off from the shots of a squadron of chasseurs, the existing state of things was better, at least for the time. The envoy alone was unmoved. The general gaiety was lost upon him, and his efforts to bear his part in the conversation, were evidently unsuccessful. At length, the cloth was removed, the wine began to circulate, and the standing toast was given: "The king of Great Britain, and the republic," which the Italians honoured by throwing the glasses in which it had been drunk out of the windows, as an especial distinction. But the pleasantry of the hour was interrupted by the horn of a courier, which announced the welcome tidings that letters were at hand. They were speedily spread among the attachés. The envoy alone held one in his hand, as if he dreaded to break the seal. "Read this for me, Cadogan," he said, to one of the young men. The letter was opened, and simply announced that the family of Sir Edward had arrived safely at the Isle of Torcello, where they had been most hospitably received by the family of its noble owner the duke, and had now no anxiety but to hear from Venice.

"I must apologise to Captain Montague," said the envoy, "for this *scene*. But the fact is, that I was

extremely uneasy, since I heard his news, for the situation of my family. Under the idea that the war was at end, and the treaty just signed, or about to be signed at Leoben, I allowed Lady Wilmot and her daughter to take advantage of the invitation of their noble friends, to spend the hot months as far as they could from our sickly canals. I should have joined them in another week; but, gentlemen," said he, turning to the astonished Italians, "I am sorry, for all our sakes, to say, that the tide of the war seems turning upon us here. The French are out in force again, and the country must soon become unsafe in every direction."

All topics were now lost in the safety of the ladies. A dozen voices volunteered at once, to set out next morning, that night, next minute, to escort them back. On this rapid performance, however, Sir Edward imposed his negative. "Not," said he, "but that I am as willing as man can be, to get them once more as near me as I can. But any very hasty proceeding on my part would undoubtedly bring the public eyes upon us, and might produce a panic among a populace, by no means too strongly inclined already, as we all know, to fight the French."

"Of what order is the daughter?" inquired Montague, in a low voice, of the sitter next him, a magnificent coxcomb, and nephew of the doge.

"The Signora?" said, or rather smiled, the Venetian, turning up a superb pair of moustaches. "A fine blonde, perfectly English, blue-eyed, auburn-haired, and charmingly *susceptible*." The Venetian's look

sufficiently proved his opinion that her susceptibility had been all his own. Montague fixed his eye rather doubtingly on the coxcomb's visage. "But, Signor Capitano, have you any curiosity to see the lady?" said the showy coxcomb.

"By all means," was the answer.

The Venetian drew from his pocket a diamond snuff-box, and from the lid took a small portrait exquisitely painted. It fully answered the description. It was that of a beautiful English girl, with the rosy cheek, the sunny hair, and the eyes of *bleu celeste*, a pair of sapphires, that at once shot deep into Montague's imagination. He gazed on the lovely countenance, and with a new feeling, put the question. "Does *she* actually love you?"

"*Actually* love me! Ah, Corpo di Bacco, to distraction," whispered the count. "I was forced to go to Milan for a month. She fell sick. Could not bear my absence, and, as you see, has been obliged to go up the country for change of air. Ha, ha, povera figlia!"

"And you marry her on her return, I presume," said Montague, with an undefined sensation, that made him wish the count at the bottom of one of his own canals.

"Caro mio, impossibile!" was the answer, "I have a score of principessas on my list already. You would not have me break the hearts of all the fine women in Venice for one? Cospetto!"

"Scoundrel!" was on the very point of Montague's tongue; when all were roused by the sound of a heavy gun from the sea. The party rose at once. The count

put his finger to his lip, restored the miniature to his snuff-box, and the snuff-box to his pocket. Montague cast an involuntary glance at the fond father, and mused on the folly of being anxious about blue-eyed daughters with too much susceptibility.

The apartment looked out upon a broad expanse of the waters. The air from the trellis of roses and myrtles breathed in deliciously. But the Englishman's spirit had met with a disturbance which perplexed him infinitely, yet which left him no resource in the calmness of evening seas, or the breath of Italian gardens. The indescribable beauty of the twilight sky of the south was reflected in the unruffled Lagune. There all was the perfection of tranquillity. But the sound of cannon was heard again, and he felt it as the war-horse hears the sound of the trumpet. The party had now crowded to the casements. A few of the populace alone were lounging about the esplanade below, but they were talking with native eagerness, and it was evident that something unusual had happened, or was happening. The envoy sent off one of his secretaries to the palace of the government to know whether any news of the French advance had been received. In the mean time, fresh signs of disturbance were given. A concourse were seen blackening along the distant shore of the Lagune, and moving rapidly towards the Lido. A cluster of rockets next shot up from the ducal palace, and fell like a shower of stars over the spot where two of the galleys lay; which were shortly seen strongly pulling out to sea, throwing up fire-works as

they passed the forts, in answer to the signals. The twilight rapidly darkens in the south, and the crowds, the galleys, and the Lido, had melted into one deep haze of purple, almost as soon as the eye could fix on them.

But they were speedily to be seen by another light. A roar burst from the long range of batteries lining the entrance to the port. The guns on the Lido soon began to play, and the horizon was kept in a blaze with their perpetual fire. The matter had now become one of more than curiosity; but, as is usual in cases of public alarm, to obtain exact intelligence of any kind was found to be out of the question. Servant after servant hurried back, each with a different tale, and generally a contradictory one. It was successively, an insurrection, an invasion, and an attack by a French fleet. It was by the peasantry, the Austrians, the French, headed by Napoleon in person, or the man in the moon! The numbers of the assailants varied according to the fright of the narrators; they were ten thousand, fifty thousand, or ten times the amount. The secretaries from whom alone any accurate intelligence might have been derived, had not returned. In this uncertainty, Montague proposed that he should be sent to the Lido to ascertain the facts, such as they were. The dispute ended in the whole party's getting on horseback and galloping towards the spot where the incessant flashes from the guns told unequivocally, that the true business of the night was going on.

But this was soon found, by the greater number, to be an expedition of more than usual difficulty. The popu-

lace choked up the way. The roads, neither very wide, nor very passable at any time, were now filled with the carts and mule-teams of the peasantry flying to Venice from what they deemed an invasion direct from Pandemonium. The two streams of population, thus hurrying from the shore and to the shore, produced a horrible confusion; and, in a few minutes after plunging into the mass, when Montague looked about for his companions, he saw nothing round him but a tide of brown visages, and clasp-knives flashing in the fire of the batteries, and heard a peal of Italian oaths and rabble oratory that almost equalled their roar. To proceed, became, at length, impossible. To return was as difficult as to go forward. His horse, at last, fell under him in a general rush of the multitude to escape the fall of a huge shell which came slowly sailing through the blue, with its fuze burning a quarter of a mile above their heads.

He was now in imminent danger; but, by an extraordinary effort of dexterity and strength, he raised the animal on its legs, and taking advantage of the space left open for the shell to do its will, struck in the spur, and rushed down to the water's edge. A hundred yards of sea, smooth as a mirror, and black as death, lay between him and the sandy tongue of the Lido. He plunged in, swam his horse across, and, to his great delight, found himself once more on dry land. There he was not likely to be impeded by the multitude; though, in better times, he might have been seized, or shot, for a spy. But the little garrison were too busily

occupied in front, and to the front he made his way. Turning his horse loose, he fixed his stand on the flank of the battery, and there had his first view of the mighty cause which had thrown the ancient mistress of the seas into such an ague-fit.

A solitary French corvette of twenty guns, with the tri-coloured flag, insolently multiplied wherever she could fix it all over her rigging, was firing, and being fired upon. The vain glory of the *grande nation* happened to be then at its height, and laws were nothing to the republic of republics. The Gaul had insisted on passing the entrance of the port, without let or hindrance, an act which had never been done before by any earthly power. The insolent demand was repelled, and the little corvette without further hesitation dashed forward, and taking the bull by the horns, poured in her cannon-shot upon a range of batteries mounting about two hundred and fifty guns! Fortune had signally favoured her so far, for their first discharge ought to have sent her and her *braves* to the bottom. But Italian holidays, maccaroni, and fright make but bad gunners, and it had already taken an hour to break down her two little masts, shave off her figure-head, and dismount a couple of her six-pounders. However, fortune will not last for ever, and a twenty-four-pound shot at once swept away her helmsman and helm, and brought her round, with her head direct on shore, and within fifty yards of the principal battery. Bold as she was, she had now nothing to do but to surrender; and surrender she did accordingly, with all the grace of her

nation. The captain and his officers landed immediately, bowing on all sides with the air of the most accomplished of mankind. But their grace was thrown away; they were, unhappily, among men who knew nothing of the elegances of war, but a great deal of its savageness. The dreadful excesses of the French in Italy, had filled the peasantry with revenge. The Italian knows no restraint with the knife in his hand and wrongs in his bosom.

At the first news of the capture, a crowd of the peasantry had crossed by boats, or swimming, to the island. The unfortunate Frenchmen were received with a howl of wrath, as if they had fallen into a den of wild beasts. Not a man of them was to leave the spot alive!

Roar on roar of fury succeeded; the slight guard, perhaps not unwillingly, were forced, and in a few minutes, all was a scene of butchery. Montague recoiled in horror, but the whirl of the crowd, yelling, fighting, and stabbing, suddenly rolled on to the spot where he stood. In the midst of the tumult, his ear was caught by a voice crying out in half-a-dozen successive languages, "that he was no Frenchman, no traitor, no enemy;" and among the rest of the languages, in excellent English. It was clear that a countryman had, by some ill-luck, got into the midst of these savages. He sprang forward, with instinctive gallantry, and dragged from the midst of the crowd a tall young man, half naked, fighting fiercely, and with a wound in his forehead that covered his face with blood, and made him a formidable exhibition.

Montague had come up just in time. The young Englishman had struggled boldly till the last moment, but the loss of blood had exhausted him, and he fell at his feet. His protector, brandishing the sword which he took from the hand of his fallen protegé, was not a figure at all to the taste of Italian heroism. Besides, the flame of their wrath had been tolerably slaked in the carnage which had already so atrociously taken place; and he was at length suffered to congratulate himself in quiet, on having saved from being cut in pieces, a countryman, who indeed seemed already almost a corpse. A little water, a little wine, and a little fresh air, however, brought him round.

It was past midnight when he reached the hotel of the embassy with his prize, in one of the shore-boats. He found the household still up, and great alarm expressed for his own safety. Some account of his adventures had already reached the envoy, coloured in the native style, with an alternate touch from Pandemonium and the skies; but, whether rescued by St. Januarius, or slain by the fangs of the fiend,—whether conquering by a spell, or gone headlong to purgatory, he was universally declared to have done wonders, and to have deserved a "sonnet" to himself, in honour of English gallantry.

But he, too, had his wonder. The half-dying figure whom he had brought with him, was no sooner cleared of the blood that covered his very pale physiognomy, than he was discovered to be Lord Avondale, the intended son-in-law of Sir Edward. The *eclaircissement* was easy. It was in his lordship's haste to meet his

bride, that the catastrophe originated. The packet in which he sailed from England had been captured by the corvette in the bay of Lyons. He had been kept on board, *malgrè*, *bongrè*, during her cruise, and was finally dragged into the quarrel with the batteries against a hundred remonstrances on his part. But in spite of the most eloquent protests against this reluctant battle with the open mouths of so many allied twenty-four-pounders, the Frenchman swore by the tri-colour, that nothing would satisfy him but putting the whole senate to the sword, or finding his bed in the sands of the republic. He had one of his wishes, and France lost a corvette and a conqueror.

For four-and-twenty hours all was rejoicing in all quarters. Venetian victories had been few, for the last three centuries, and the warriors of the commonwealth were by no means disposed to let the sinking of a French sloop go for nothing, if it were armed only with cigars. The whole city, from the piazza to the fish-stands along the shore, was in a blaze. The night echoed with squibs and crackers. The nobles gave a ball. The cannoneers from the Lido marched through the little narrow streets, like so many lions; and the peasantry who had executed the final portion of the work, exhibited the patches of their unfortunate victims' lace and clothes, as if every fragment were a ribbon of the order of St. Anthony, the invincible, or a knot of the holy slipper itself.

The envoy was, probably, the sole exception to the public gaiety; which exception the crowd of "mag-

nificentissimi" who came to communicate their intelligence of this stupendous achievement, and share his very excellent supper, attributed by many a significant gesture, to English jealousy of the national renown in arms—but, for which, if the Englishman himself had been consulted, he might have given the unpopular reason, that the night's performance would, in all likelihood, be the most expensive victory that had ever been obtained by the "City of the Seas."

Montague was on his feet by daybreak, and was cooling his fever by the dewy air which flows in before the sun comes to scorch the Italian to the core; when a chaloupe, with a couple of officers in a foreign uniform on board, came rushing up the canal, shot along to the landing place of the ducal palace, and discharged her cargo, which immediately disappeared within the gates of his highness. A knot of gondoliers were standing outside, evidently in no good temper with the arrival. All was quiet round him,—the household had not yet slept off the effect of their night's rejoicing, and Montague quietly descending the superb flight of marble steps which dipped into the waters, still glittering with the dawn, hailed one of the fruit-boats to take him over to the scene of the affair. The Venetians have no love for an affray, except it be of their own choosing. The helmsman quickly conceived that two furious Frenchmen, and of the staff too, had not come at five in the morning, only to inquire for the Doge's health; and he recommended his fare to let him steer in

any other direction. Some time was lost in the discussion, until the sight of an English guinea, the grand softener of the foreign soul, suddenly turned the argument and the helm together, and Montague's foot was set on the palace esplanade. He found his dinner friend, the showy Count Carlo Spadinari, coming at the instant out of the portal, disconcerted, to the oblivion of all his graces. He ran full against Montague, and recoiled from the shock with an oath which could have been uttered only by a Venetian exasperated to the utmost possible indignation.

"What does this mean, count?" was the young Englishman's inquiry, as he struggled to save himself from being shot into the very centre of the most silvery of waters.

"Hah, Diavolo!" was the answering scream, "*Mille perdone;* but who expected to have found Mi Lor Montague here at this hour? The fact is,"—and the Signor slowly recovered his respiration and his elegance, "Psha; may all the fiends take our last night's work! The news has reached those scoundrels of French, and two of the Etat-major, one of them Buonaparte's own aid-de-camp, Junot, have just arrived, to give us the very pleasing intelligence that we are to provide rations within twelve hours for twenty thousand ruffians, now on their march for the city; and who will do us the honour to make Venice their head-quarters, until the amplest reparation, and so forth, is made, and all this for the capture of that miserable corvette."

"Well, and they are actually coming?" eagerly

inquired Montague. "Just the very thing you could have wished for, and at the very time."

The count stared. Montague, all alert at the idea of seeing service, followed his own speculation. "You have at least ten thousand troops within call; batteries in plenty, as I know; the sea round you—sailors against conscripts, frigates against boats; the people in spirits for fighting. Let, then, twenty thousand men, or three times their number come, and you have nothing to do but to give them a first-rate flogging, and take all that are left of them, like so many rats in a trap. That will indeed be something to talk of."

The Venetian's visage grew longer at every word. Montague, already in the midst of the battle by anticipation, was darting his animated gaze round the defences of the city, and pointing with his finger to the spots where the business was to be decided; when his showy friend, with a contortion of which nothing on earth is capable but an Italian nose and chin, murmured "Cospettone! No. They would eat us alive! I am now on my way to the French head-quarters."

"For what purpose under heaven?" asked Montague, fixing his eyes, half in scorn, half in astonishment, on the convulsed muscles of the speaker.

"For what purpose?" coldly came the answer,—"why, what but to try if they will suffer the grand council to apologize for the *contre tems* of last night, and accept of half a million of ducats in place of the rations?"

"*Bravo, bravissimo!*" irresistibly exclaimed Montague. "Then, while you have a ducat you will have the French.—But a new thought strikes me, when do you set off?"

"The moment the council can be assembled to ratify the proposal," said the count, languidly: "I suppose in an hour or two. I wish they would choose St. Anthony, or anybody else for their ambassador, for I have a thousand things on my hands; for example, to pay a morning visit to the Principessa di Blandini; to see my tailor, who has just come from Paris; to give directions for the furniture of my gondola; and besides—"

"And besides, Signor? Out with the fact. You are ashamed of the mission. You have no great love for wading your way through the French patroles, and, after all, begging pardon for this trembling old coterie of superannuated fools and knaves. Not their whole bank would make me undertake it," indignantly interrupted Montague.

"Doubtless, caro mio," said, or sighed the Signor, twisting his exquisitely curled moustaches; "It is an abominable trouble altogether. I hate the French—they are *so* vulgar!"

The conference ended by Montague's proposal to ride along with the count, as a matter of curiosity, towards the French camp, at the appointed hour.

He returned to the hotel of the embassy, and there found that fresh confusion had arisen. A letter, written in pencil, had been received from Lady Wilmot,

saying, "That the French had appeared near Fucina the night before, that the duke and his family had been forced to fly from Torcello, in expectation of the island's being plundered, and that they were all on the road to Brescia,—with but little hope, however, of reaching it in safety, as the enemy's light troops were spread every where through the country."

Something more had evidently been written, but the peasant not being perfectly sure of his neck for carrying letters through the enemy's lines, had wrapped up his despatch so carefully in his rags, that the pencil marks were beyond all decyphering. The envoy, a bold and a feeling man, was deliberate and diplomatic no more. He had instantly ordered horses to be ready for him on terra firma, and was stepping into his barge to follow his fugitives, at the moment when Montague returned. But, at the same moment, a message from the terrified Doge, who wished to consult with the British representative, was brought to him. Vexatious as this delay was, there was no alternative; the public business must be done. He accepted Montague's chivalric offer to turn his expedition with the count into the means of a search for Lady Wilmot and her daughter. The rowers dipped their oars in the canal, and the envoy was on his way to the palace. Montague, in half an hour after, was inspecting and urging the tardy proceedings of the Signor at his toilet; and at length the new embassy was sweeping its way over the northern face of the Lagune.

No experiment in diplomacy could be more dis-

astrous, from the beginning. As the gondolas approached the shore, it was clear that the enemy were there before them. A scattered fire of musquetry rattled in all directions round Fucina, and the sight of the peasantry flying across the fields with their cattle, showed that the French foragers were pursuing their usual game. The ducal gondola pushed into Fucina, where the envoy's horses should have been ready for the count and his suite, but a shower of grape from a French howitzer, which ploughed up the water for a hundred yards round them, told effectually that there was no landing for them at Fucina, and that the horses were already good prize. The count proposed an instant return to Venice; but this, Montague, who had further objects before him, indignantly refused, and insisted on another trial. The gondola was then steered for an inlet some miles lower down, and the landing was effected beyond the reach of the French sharp-shooters. The expedition now began to move. The gondoliers were ordered to lie on their oars till the count's return. But those were delicate times. French posts too, were awkward neighbours; and the count was no sooner fairly entangled in the thickets that line the low shores of the Adriatic marshes, than the boatmen, consulting their own value to the state, slipped from their moorings, and moved, without trumpet or drum, towards home.

The night was dark, and soon threatened a storm. The count and his suite were already mid-leg deep in the mire of bye-roads, that seemed to have been constructed on the principle of the spider's web. To

bivouac in this world of brambles, with the probability of being swept into the Adriatic before morning, on the surface of some overflowed ditch, was a trial for the patience of any man; but such an indignity had never been heard of before in the history of a noble Venetian. At length the promise of the night became fully realised,— a few broad, bright flashes along the horizon,— a few fierce gusts, that shook the forest boughs thick upon their heads,—a few heavy drops, and down came the tempest!

All was brought to a stand. The count protested against advancing another step, and would have given half his estate for the sight of a cottage. Montague protested against the waste of time in going back, and the absurdity of supposing that the gondolas would wait along shore in the midst of a whirlwind. This argument he had the opportunity of reinforcing from the first rising ground, which displayed to all eyes the cluster of torches in their bows, rolling away far over the waters. At length it was agreed that the count should remain where he was, and the party should separate to discover some place of shelter. Montague set out at once, forced his way through a *chevaux-de-frise* of brambles, and found on the other side of them a French suttler, drunk, and asleep in a cart loaded with the produce of some plundered farm. His first act was to fling the fellow out of the cart, and his next to drive it towards the count's bivouac.

The exploit was bold, but imprudent; for the ejected

suttler raised a roar for his loss, which awoke a sleeping outpost! The drums beat, the chasseurs were all on the alert,—shots began to rattle through the hedges in all directions. There was bustle enough for beating up the quarters of a brigade; and when Montague reached the point of union, he found the count alone, and half dissolved into a jelly with rain and terror. To wait for the rest of the party, of course would have been idle. The count was taken up into the cart, the lash applied stoutly to the little Ferarrese pony, and away they drove, over ruts, logs, and stones, that shook the unfortunate Venetian's teeth in his head. At length the pony neighing suddenly, and snorting, brought them within a glimpse of a blaze from a farm-house window.

But all was to be unlucky on this night of ill-luck. Instead of the quiet supper and truckle-bed of the farmer, they were saluted by a shot from an invisible sentinel. They had stumbled on the quarters of a squadron of French hussars! Montague counselled a retrograde movement without delay. But the pony knew his home, and had made up his mind not to stir a step. The delay brought a volley from the hussars, who had run to the window on the discharge of the sentinel's musket. Montague felt himself wounded; and the count gave a groan as if every bullet of the squadron had made a lodgment in his body.

"Fly!" exclaimed the Englishman, as he saw the hussars pouring out on foot from the farm-house. The count only groaned deeper still. Montague, determined

on not being made a prisoner, sprang out, plunged into thicket—fell, and felt no more.

A fortnight after the French had retired from the coast of the Adriatic, the young Englishman was lying on a bed in the farm-house. The hussars had found him in the wood, apparently dead, but his fine features had interested some of the sentimentalists among them ; and as they were a little ashamed of having been so hastily alarmed by a civilian in a cart, they brought the surgeon of their regiment to examine him, before he was laid where civilian and soldiers can frighten each other no more. The surgeon found that life was there ; and though his patient raved and dreamed for a fortnight, he had brought him within sight of recovery.

But, who is there who has not owed some of the most fortunate services of his existence to woman ? An hospital of the "Sœurs de Charité," in the neighbourhood, had supplied the attendance, which man could never give to man ; and Montague, on the surgeon's following his regiment, was delivered over to the healing power of those soft hands, soft words, and soft footsteps, which have done more since the world began, than "poppy, mandragora, and all the soothing syrups of the world."

What men, mad either with pain, passion, or perplexity, think on their pillow, might seem to be matter of no great import to those who look or listen. But one of the sisterhood, at least, had begun to listen more than her share, to the waking dreams of the young and fine-countenanced invalid. They were

often as wild as an Arabian fable ; but they often showed the richness of an imaginative mind, and an ardent heart. He frequently conceived himself to have passed away from the world, and to be enamoured of some of the bright spirits of the stars ; his speeches then glowed with all the eloquence of feeling ; he pleaded, he implored, he exulted, he poured out all the language of a native sensibility, elevated by the noblest and most creative of all the passions of man. The young sister began daily to discover that her attendance was more interesting ; but at seventeen all are courageous ; and the delight was not discovered to be the most serious part of the danger. At length the turn of an elder sister came, and the young devotee was forced to suspend her skill in the art of healing. She retired ; — but her world seemed to have changed within a fortnight. The effect was now fully revealed to herself. She had never felt it so miserable to have nothing to do. The routine of the convent life seemed a calamity beyond all endurance. The garden, the cloister, the cell, and the refectory were equally irksome. She grew unaccountably wretched, and alone beguiled her hours with attempting to recall the wild eloquence of the dreamer.

The effect on the dreamer himself was equally strange. The returning tide of his life seemed to have suddenly ebbed. He had his revêries still. They were wild, but without the richness of his former extravagancies. He saw no more of those lovely visions, that held him in perpetual chase of their float-

ing footsteps and silver wings. He followed them no more through landscapes of perpetual luxuriance, and listened to them no longer by fountains of living music. The glow of his speeches had entirely passed away, and the ancient sister who now administered to him, and who probably expected to have heard some of those pathetic addresses directed to herself, declared that she had never attended a duller young gentleman in the course of her life.

But, one evening Montague opened his eyes, and saw the seraph of his visions once more! Yet still more distinct, clear, and beautiful. The evening sun threw an amber and visionary radiance into the chamber, and for a few moments after his awaking, he actually thought that the form had descended on the flood of glory that poured from the casement. With feeble and dazzled eyes, he continued to gaze. But a strange idea suddenly started into his mind. He recognised the singularly pure complexion, the auburn hair, the brilliant dark blue depth of eye.—It was the original of the portrait which he had seen in the possession of that most consummate of all coxcombs, the Count Carlo. His heart sank within him, at the thought—he unconsciously pronounced her name. The vision instantly vanished. It was a reality!

That night he received a note, entreating him "Never to mention his having seen the writer,—acknowledging that she was the daughter of the British envoy, but that circumstances of the most painful nature rendered it imperative on her to remain unknown to her family

for a time." Montague preserved her secret; but his anxiety to know whether the fair "Sœur de Charité" was still near him became irrestrainable. His bed could detain him no longer. He inquired in all quarters. The inquiry was wholly in vain. The day after the date of her note, she had bidden farewell to the sisterhood, and had left no trace behind.

In the course of another week the invalid was within the hotel of the embassy. The invasion had been bought off. But the public joy on this event, had not extinguished private anxieties. The envoy was in great sorrow,—Lady Wilmot had made her escape with extreme difficulty, but her daughter had been lost in the confusion of the flight from the French, and notwithstanding every effort, no intelligence of her could be obtained. Montague was panting with his secret, but his lips were sealed; though even if he had spoken, he could not now tell the place of her retreat. He had too another bond upon him. The intended bridegroom, now fully recovered, was daily before his eyes, and he felt a sensation in his presence which sickened at the idea of seeing the goddess of his idolatry given to another. Still, the thoughts that this lovely creature, so sought and so sorrowed after, had actually stooped to give her affections to so palpable a puppy as the count, gave him a sensation still more sickening.

At length, conceiving it just possible that the envoy might have two daughters, and thus the difficulty might be cleared; he made the inquiry of his valet, a

personage who generally fathoms the secrets of families, at least on the Continent. But Monsieur Papillote was at fault; he protested that he knew nothing on the subject; adding that as *he* did not know it, the affair was impossible. He then made his inquiry of the envoy himself. Sir Edward answered promptly and gravely, "Mr. Montague, I have but one daughter, if fortunately I have even that one." The subject was too painful, in the uncertainty of the moment, to be more than touched on, and the inquirer was left as much in the dark as ever.

He made one last inquiry; it was from the count. The Venetian had been made prisoner, but sent back on the discovery of his mission. He owed a retort for exposing his diplomacy to the storm; and the inquiry was met with a peculiarly bitter sneer. The dialogue became warm; and Montague, insisting that the honour of his friend the envoy's family should not be compromised by the count's frivolity, demanded the restoration of the miniature to Sir Edward. Count Carlo haughtily refused. Montague retired, and sent him a message to meet him on the Island of Torcello, as the spot most remote from disturbance, in two hours. The count was the first gladiator in Venice, accepted the message, and openly pronounced in the caffé, that the impudent Englishman had just half an hour to live.

Montague was in his chamber writing some letters to England, with the feelings natural to a man who might never write another; when the intended bridegroom, now Lord Avondale, tapped at the door.

"This is an unlucky business, my dear Montague," said the young nobleman; "but as there is no use in talking about it now, I come to offer you any service in my power."

"How have you heard of this, Avondale?"

"By that most communicative of all things, the tongue of Count Carlo himself. That intolerable fellow, who boasts of the hearts of every Donna of Italy, and thinks himself possessed of all its charms, has been vapouring, like a fool as he is, before the rabble in the piazza, and in consequence I came without delay."

"Then you are welcome. You are just in time, and now let us be gone to Torcello."

The young nobleman pressed his hand, and they left the hotel together.

The gondolas of both parties grated on the pebbles of the island at the same moment. Lord Avondale advanced to the count, and asked his second, one of the diplomatic body, in the usual terms,—whether the nature of the quarrel demanded this mode of settling it, and whether any explanation might not prevent two friends from being involved in the consequences.

"Of the quarrel, I know nothing, my lord," said the diplomat, "except that it has arisen about a mere matter of etiquette, a thing so trifling as the retention of a lady's portrait, the lady herself being probably no longer in the land of the living."

"And must my preserver Montague throw himself away upon such a fancy as this?" thought his lordship.

"Had my friend any personal interest in the lady?" he asked.

"None whatever," said the count, hastily interposing. "He has insulted me, absolutely for nothing, for whim, spleen; for a lady whom he never saw in his life. The daughter of your envoy."

This produced a new storm. The bridegroom was furious, raved, and insisted on Montague's giving up his right of chastising the count's insolence, to himself. This, however, was not to be conceded; and, as the simplest way of settling the affair, the whole four finally drew, flung their coats on the ground, and engaged each other.

A spectacle of this order would have collected a crowd any where but in the sands of the Great Desert. Boats were soon seen flitting across the waters to the spot. The skill of the two Englishmen was altogether inferior to the practised swordsmanship of the Italians; but they were active, daring, and they fully kept the more adroit fencers in awe. The groups now gathered towards the island, and among the rest, one of the market-boats from the Bolognese pulled up close, with a dozen of red-capped clowns, and ribbon-haired damsels, straining all their eyes to enjoy the novelty. The caution of the Italians, and the awkwardness of the Englishmen, had hitherto confined the combat to a few scratches of the sword's point; but now Montague, impatient of this tardy hostility, gave a sudden spring forward, dashed his sword through the count's arm, and in the impulse, following his weapon, fell against the count, already sufficiently astonished at his wound.

His weight brought down the Italian, and they rolled on the sand together. At this moment a scream from the boat was heard, and one of the women springing on the land, rushed forward a few paces towards the combatants, and fainted at their feet.

To continue the conflict was now impossible: Lord Avondale and the diplomat had fought for form's sake,—and the count had got something to employ himself with, in a handsome section of the fleshy part of his right arm, which bled profusely, and by his own account, smarted more horribly than any wound ever inflicted on a count before. Montague, wiping the sand from his visage, was left to offer his attentions to the peasant who had exhibited so much more sensibility than her countrywomen. Raising her up to the air, and removing her hood, he saw — the Sœur de Charité! the fugitive note writer! the vision! He was delighted. But the next thought stung him to the quick. He saw the lost daughter of Sir Edward, the bride of Lord Avondale, and worst of all, the fair intriguante of the notoriously profligate Count Carlo. Unconsciously, he deposited her again on the sand, and stood, gazing on a countenance, that, lifeless as it was, still seemed to him the perfection of innocence and loveliness. Lord Avondale, who had now sheathed his rapier, came up, and gazed along with him at the beautiful paysanne. Montague expected to have heard some exclamation of joy or grief. Not a syllable! His lordship, with the look of one perfectly at his ease, brought some water to bathe her temples. She opened her

fine eye. Still no sign of recognition on either side. Montague's heart revived. But the start of the count, and the shudder of the lady, as he advanced to indulge his curiosity, showed that, there at least, the recognition was complete. His blood sank a hundred degrees below the freezing point. In ten-fold perplexity, he almost wished that the count's sword had saved him the trouble of developing a problem which darkened every instant.

At length, the young nobleman, who alone preserved the use of his senses, came forward, after the exchange of a few words with the fair fugitive, and leading her towards his friend, begged to introduce ——

"Lady Avondale," murmured Montague, with an effort that made him writhe.

"No," said his lordship, with a good-humoured laugh. "Plurality of wives is not British law *yet*."

The light grew upon the lover. He gazed in speechless admiration. But a sound of oars awoke him; it was the count's gondola, about to carry off its master. Was it possible that *she* could have loved him? But, let what might happen, the Venetian must not be suffered to carry off his trophy. Montague made but one spring from the spot where he stood, to the gunwale of the boat, and there caught the count in the act of stepping on board. The miniature was demanded, and again refused. The Englishman grasped him with the strength of rage. The count was in peril; he was already hanging half-way over the side,—another instant would have seen him plunged ten fathoms deep under it. He

was prudent, capitulated, and the picture was surrendered! The achievement had not escaped the eyes of the lady, if ever there was meaning in a smile and blush of thanks; they made her look handsomer than ever in the eyes of her worshipper. Still there were difficulties. Nothing was yet explained. The crimson cheek was bent immoveably on the ground. The third party good-humouredly protested "that all this was but a waste of time; that if neither would speak, it must be impossible to solve the problem." He "recommended an immediate return to the hotel of the embassy." But the fairest of paysannes evidently again shrank from the proposal. Montague as evidently had no inclination to move. The peace-maker almost got out of patience. "My good friends," said he, with a grave smile, "this quarrel is premature; you should wait till the British chaplain gives you the privilege of misunderstanding each other. Montague, be a man! Remember, I too, have my anxieties. No intelligence has been received from Lady Wilmot and her daughter."

"Her daughter!" echoed Montague, with a glance at the *inconnue*.

Lord Avondale interpreted the glance. "Oh, I see the whole affair. You think the inquiry in another quarter would be more interesting. Pray, Signora," said he, turning to the lady, "by what name shall I have the honour to introduce you to this gentleman?" The cheek was but the more crimsoned. "Well, then, Mr. Montague, captain in his Britannic majesty's hussars,

hand into our chaloupe the fair unknown—the *sœur de charité*, now, doubtless, flying to some other sisterhood, where she will be out of sight of this wicked world, hussars and all." He placed her passive hand in his friend's. But with all that friend's admiration of the exquisite creature before him, he was a firm and high hearted man. He paused. "One question," said he, "I must be suffered to ask. Did this lady give this portrait to the Count Spadinari?"

He pronounced these words in a tone, which probably would have trembled much less, if he had been facing a battery.

"Give!" was the only word which escaped the glowing lip beside him. But it was sufficiently expressive. She started back from his hand, and turning to Lord Avondale, with a look in which the high blood of England was not to be mistaken, said, "Now, my lord, I put myself under your protection. I am ready to go to Venice. I demand to go to Sir Edward Wilmot's house without delay!" The lover in vain abounded in apologies for his abruptness. The noble in vain attempted to reconcile. The lady stepped into the chaloupe; took her seat as far as possible from her chevalier; and sat with her hood concealing her face, and her head bowed upon her hand during the voyage. A sob now and then escaped her. But neither was honoured by a word.

Twilight was again dipping the golden spires of the city, one by one, in purple, when the barge entered the Grand Canal. No spectacle of Europe is more cal-

culated to delight the eye of romance, than the vistas of marble, and masses of mingled Italian and Oriental architecture, which the sinking sun colours with such etherial hues along its waters. But none of the party at that hour would have had eyes for any thing less than a volcano, or have felt any thing less than an earthquake. All were as silent as if the human tongue never existed; and as unseeing, among all the glittering objects round them, as if they were asleep. The paysanne was still wrapt inexorably in her hood; the hussar was absorbed in thinking whether she ever meant to throw it off; and the noble was busy with thoughts and terrors of the loss of his future bride.

But when they at length ranged along the esplanade of the hotel of the embassy, a different spirit seemed to be fully let loose there. By the blaze of lights from the casements, a crowd were seen moving backwards and forwards with all the signs of festivity. Lord Avondale rushed in. In a few moments he was seen advancing to the casement, evidently in high exultation, with a female hanging on his arm. Montague at once rightly conjectured that Lady Wilmot and the future Lady Avondale had returned in safety; but what was to be his own fate, and that of the strange enchantress who had wrought such a spell over his own heart? Once, and once only, she had raised the hood; it was to give a glance at the hotel, but it had been instantly dropped again, with a deep sigh. At length he approached her, and soothingly offered to lead her from the boat. She paused; her reluctance was

palpably one of extreme pain. She wept aloud, shuddered, and waved her hand tremblingly, for him to leave her to herself. He stood gazing, grieving, and more perplexed than ever.

At length a train of domestics, with torches, came from the portal, and in the midst of them the envoy, followed by his daughter and son-in-law. He pronounced the word "Caroline,"—it acted magically—she flew into his arms. They retired; and all was explained and forgiven.

The problem was now solved. As they sat down to the splendid table of the embassy, Montague, placed between the envoy and the fair fugitive, received the little history.

"Two years ago," said Sir Edward, "when I first had the honour of this appointment, I brought my second daughter with me, leaving her mother and sister to arrange the family affairs, which the necessity of my coming here with all expedition, had left unsettled in England. Though it is in Caroline's presence, I may say, that the Venetian sonneteers thought much more of the envoy's daughter than of the envoy himself, and the result was, a proposal from the Count Spadinari. As he was immensely opulent, and of the highest rank in the country, I felt no objection to him. As he was reckoned the greatest beau in Venice, and certainly had the handsomest villa, gondola, and equipages, I conceived that Caroline could have as little objection. And here I have a mind to let her finish the story for herself."

A gesture from Caroline declined the honour.

The envoy proceeded,—"I, perhaps, exhibited too much irritation at her refusal of what I thought a brilliant alliance. However, she knew more about him, as it appears, than I did; and among the rest, that, to frighten her into the match, he had sworn to put me to death by poniard or pistol, on the first opportunity, unless she married him. At length those menaces, of which I, of course, knew nothing, or I should not have trusted myself within reach of his pen-knife so often at table, I find, frightened the poor girl to such a degree, that she thought her only chance of saving me from this tiger was to fly, give herself out as dead, or do some other thing just as romantic. She fled, as it appears, to an establishment of *Sœurs de Charité*, where some old acquaintance of hers gave her shelter. The rest is characteristic of the country," he added, in an indignant tone. "It amounted to this. That all sorts of reports were spread, I now suppose, by the revenge of the scoundrel himself. On this occasion I was fool enough to determine never to see the face of my poor girl again. In fact, I forbade her name to be mentioned in my presence. I resolved thenceforth to know, to have but one daughter. I immediately sent for Lady Wilmot and my elder girl from England, and renounced all recollection of my wanderer. This accounts, Mr. Montague, for the declaration which I made to you, and which, indeed, at that time, I believed to be true, in every sense, as from the distracted state of the country, and the absence of all

tidings for a year, I began to believe that she was no more on earth. The rest, I presume, you know better than I can contrive to tell it to you. As to the portrait of which Caroline spoke to me before we sat down to table, I am fully convinced that the Count stole it, not being able to get it in any other way, and sleight of hand being a national branch of education. The knave deserved the humiliation of having it torn from him publicly, for which I leave the owner herself to express her acknowledgments."

The acknowledgments were made — they cost many charming words, but the dialogue might have lasted till midnight, without the discovery on either side that the conversation had continued too long. Within another week a double fête united the affianced. Every thing in Venice takes the shape of a public festival; gondolas showily filled crowded along the canal by which the bridal party proceeded to the little chapel of the embassy. Lord Avondale and his betrothed led the way, with the pomp due to his rank and opulence; the gondola with Montague and the *çi-devant Sœur de Charité* followed.

They were all fine specimens of the youth and beauty of their country. The cheers of the people, as they passed the terraces, followed them. It was a pageant of the heart. If Cleopatra's galley, sailing down the Cydnus, had more gilding on it, it did not contain a lovelier countenance than Caroline Wilmot's,—nor a more delighted spirit than Charles Montague's.

D'Alava.

A NEW VERSION OF AN OLD STORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SCRAP-BOOK OF A YOUNG FRIEND.

Slow o'er the deep sky floats the snowy cloud,
Borne by the light wind through the yielding air;
Casting, o'er field and fell, blue shadows proud,
Bright making brighter, and fair things more fair.

"Lo!" cries the spirit of the cloud, "how I
Compel the wind to bear me on its wings;
Lo! how my fleecy robe flutt'ring on high
Shadows of beauty on the dull earth flings."

"Vapour!" exclaimed the Sun, "not thou, but I
Draw from the depths of air the happy breeze
That bears thee on: I raised thee up on high
A thin mist rising from the wide spread seas.

"Vain is your boast! the loveliness and light,
Shadow and brilliance, take their source from me;
My absence makes all dim, my presence bright,
I, make the beauty of all earth and thee."

Man, like the cloud, vaunts brightness, grace and power,
Thinks that he rules, when he but serves the most;
God sees the empty creature of an hour,
Still shines upon him, and forgives his boast.

G. P. R. James.

FLORA MACDONALD.

BY ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

During the visit of George the Fourth to Scotland, in the year 1822, men of all clans and tartans, from mainland and isle, hurried to Edinburgh to see their royal visitor—offer him service, or render homage for their lands according to the spirit of ancient tenures. The king, on the third day of his arrival, exhausted by prolonged visits, and the civilities of etiquette, saw the sun go down, and the moon get up, with something like pleasure; and imagined that the toils of royalty were done for the day. The hope was formed but to be disappointed. A strange voice was heard in sharp altercation with the lord in waiting, saying, "I have come from a distant isle, and the king will see Donald Maclean; for he has something to show him that he would not miss the look of for the best diamond in his crown." The king and Sir Walter Scott, who was his majesty's chief man during his stay, exchanged looks and smiles; it was but a wave of the hand, and the islander stood in the apartment.

He was in full costume, wore a bonnet and plume, great breadth of tartan, carried a handsome dirk at his belt, and held in his hand a small instrument of chased silver, resembling a harp, with the strings of which he seemed familiar.

"Ha! Maclean," exclaimed Sir Walter, recognising the stranger at once; "who so welcome as Donald of the harp? Your majesty has heard all kinds of music since your coming, but none in sweetness to rival that of my brother Makkar here, whose touch, like that of Glasgerion,

> "Can harp a fish out of the water,
> And water out of a stane."

"Your praise suits the lowlander rather than the highlander now," said Maclean, bowing to the far-famed minstrel. "I brought my harp but as a comrade from whom I am unwilling to part; not to help me with my message, which is plain and prosaic."

"Out with thy tale, then," said his majesty, with something akin to impatience in his tone; "I expected poetry, from this preamble."

The highlander dropped his harp, and producing a piece of oak from the folds of his plaid, held it up, and said, "This bit of oak, black, you see, as ink, as hard as iron, and as salt as a slice of Lot's wife, bears a strange story with it. It once formed part of as gallant a fleet as ever breasted brine: there were brave soldiers, and proven leaders on board, with half the

strength and talent of a mighty kingdom; yet it was attacked, and stricken, and scattered: what the battle spared, the tempest took; and this shred of wood, fished up from the bottom of a highland bay, is all that is left to intimate that the fate of the Spanish Armada was but typical of what, in your majesty's day, befel the invading fleets of a spirit mightier far than that of Philip. As a relic of British triumph, I lay it at our monarch's feet." So saying, he placed the fragment at the king's feet, and bowing, turned to be gone.

"Stay, sir," said his majesty, "we part not so; as your present reminds me of my people's victories, so wish I to remind you that the king of England makes the gift welcome, and will place it in his royal armoury."

The islander drew himself proudly up, as he said, coldly, "I have made a mistake—it was to the king of Great Britain I brought this gift; Sir Walter, where is he to be found?"

The king smiled, and holding out his hand to the other, said, "I bow to your rebuke; and now I can account for the darkening brows and kindling eyes of many chiefs who had not the kindness, like my friend Maclean, to remind me that in not including in my dominions this brave and ancient kingdom, I was resigning a noble half of my empire."

"Donald," said Sir Walter, "I must have you to stand to my friends Wilkie, or Allan for a picture of the Raid of Redswaire; for you realized the image

I have ever formed in my mind of the proud warden:

> "He raise and raxed him where he stood,
> And bade them match him wi' his marrows."

"But, my friend, his majesty expected a more poetic exhibition of your powers. Has that morsel of black oak no wild legend linked to it?"

"Our highland legends," replied Maclean, "have been too coldly received by Saxon gentlemen to induce me to try one on a king. The heroic strains of Ossian, admired every where abroad, are laughed at in England. But why not relate a romance about this bit of oak yourself, Sir Walter? You can match ten highland harpers in the art of making something out of nothing."

"Maclean has you there, Sir Walter," said the king; "in truth you have charmed the world with so many brilliant fictions in your own name, that, like the black knight in Ivanhoe, men say you are content to achieve marvels in a mask. Give us the tradition of Maclean's oak, were it but to show, which, by-the-bye is needless, that your genius is never at a loss."

"Your majesty's wish is a command," said Sir Walter, "but I fear I shall so handle a highland legend as to induce my brother Makkar to interpose, and tell the tale himself."

With that glimmer in the eyes, and pursing of the mouth which, in Sir Walter, always announced something of the mingled serious and comic, and seemingly with no very good-will to the task, he began:

"One sunny day, my liege, of this present summer, a strange ship was observed standing towards the shore of a little isle, which, though belonging to Britain's crown, your majesty may never have heard named,"—

"Heard named!" muttered Maclean, "the isle of Tobermorie is famous in tale and song."

"The clearest eyes in the isle," continued Sir Walter, "began to examine the make and the rigging, nor did a closer approach afford better knowledge; for first one anchor, and then another was dropt into the bay, and the mariners, like men whom the shore rather menaced than invited, seemed resolved to keep on board, and hold intercourse with no one. Various were the surmises, which the coming of this ship occasioned; for a vessel of any mark is a sort of marvel among our western isles."

"A small marvel!" murmured Maclean; "as if we had not the fleets of the Norsemen, and as if we had forgot the destruction of the Florida, the best ship of the Armada."

"Various, my liege," pursued Sir Walter, "were the surmises which this ship occasioned: a Macraw, who kept a small still in one of the caverns of the coast, trembled for his dearest of distillations, and declared the vessel to be an excise cutter, come to extinguish the little freedom still abiding by traffic. A Macgillary who had retired, (I use a mild word) from one of your majesty's marching regiments, without consulting the colonel, looked upon it as an armed

schooner on a cruise for deserters, and took to the hills accordingly. A Cameron,—I know not how he came there,—who fondly believed that the line of the Pretender was immortal, tossed his bonnet, and began to whistle as he marched among the heather, the air of 'You're welcome, Charlie Stuart;' while Maggie Macdonald, a reputed witch from the headland of Mull, exclaimed, 'A shadow and not a ship—a demon and not the work of men's hands; for see, it has dropt anchor over the spot where the Florida, with all her treasures, lies in fifty fathom of water—a spot haunted by the spirit of the princess of Andalusia; I have seen her corpse-lights myself.'

"That's all truth," exclaimed the islander; "I should like to hear how you came to know that, Sir Walter?"

"My ears, Maclean, hear further," replied Scott, "than you are aware of; the lowlands are not without even spiritual intelligence: would you monopolize for your highlands and isles all such intercourse? Content you, man, with the second sight, and allow us humbler folk of the south, to discover upland legends in our own way. But to my story—Maggie Macdonald's opinion did not go uncontradicted; a Maclean, who was beside her, exclaimed, 'It is an English ship, come with a diving bell to pick up all the red gold out of the Florida; but it serves our isle right to rob her—she has never done luck since she took to the heather with Prince Charlie."

"I wish to say no word of offence," cried the

islander; "but may a Saxon knife cut my highland lugs, and mend a gauger's brogues with the bits, if you, or any body else, ever heard such words from the lips of Donald Maclean. So put that in your sporan, Sir Walter."

"Well, then, even tell the story yourself," replied Scott, internally enjoying the islander's anger, and his majesty's wonder.

"By all the water in the blessed well of Tobermorie, I shall e'en do that same; for I see you are bent on making mirth of as fine a tradition as isle or mainland contains."

"But Maclean," said his majesty, "as this is to be a poem, will you not in the spirit of a true minstrel, accompany it with the music of your harp."

The islander coloured as he replied, "This harp belonged to Flora Macdonald, and the strings have continued mute since she touched them to soothe the miseries of one whose high courage, and daring deeds, deserved not the fortune of an outcast."

"You may speak out, Maclean," said the king; "I feel for the misfortunes of one whose blood was the same as my own; and it was one of the first acts of my reign to place a noble monument over the dust of our unfortunate princes."

"And right glad were you of the opportunity, sire," answered Maclean; "but I wrong you; for the gallant, some say misguided men, who in battle and in exile died and suffered in the cause of the Stuarts, your majesty has shown a sympathy, unfelt by the earlier

princes of your house. The sea, the shore, and the two-edged sword, were the friends of your throne, and I murmur not against the decrees of Heaven."

"Yet a Maclean hesitates to touch his harp at the bidding of his prince," said his majesty. "Sir Walter, the loyal spirit of verse resides but in your own bosom."

"Verse—true verse, is ever loyal, sire," said the islander, "and it is to be found every where in the north; but it lies with us, as gold lies in the mine; it wants the popular impress which your majesty's lineaments give to make it pass current. I have not Sir Walter's excellence in the art of harmonious rhyme; but since I have promised it, I shall tell the tale of that Flora Macdonald, called in our land, Flora the First, at which the introduction of Sir Walter pointed; but your majesty will excuse my imperfect English—I must translate as I speak, and I cannot always find a southern substitute for our heroic highland.

"One evening of that year in which the Spanish Armada visited the shores of our isles, my ancestress, Eupheme Macdonald, sat by the side of the blessed well of Tobermorie, to dip, on the rising of the moon, the eldest son of the chief of the Macleans, on whose bloom a sea-elf was supposed to have breathed. As she sat with the child in her lap, looking on the fountain, the water became shaken and agitated; and something was presented to her sight which caused her to shriek, and, without biding the rising of the moon, to hasten with the child to the chamber of her mistress.

Now Eupheme was a relation of the lady, and had nursed her when a child; so she procured ready admittance, and could speak her mind without fear, 'O may all the saints of the house of Macdonald be near you!' cried Eupheme; 'for misery is about to befall you.'

"'What misery can befall me, woman?' exclaimed Flora, for she was as haughty as she was beautiful; 'is not this castle strong, and the Maclean brave?'

"'Both, both,' answered the other; 'but in your strength lies your ruin. It was no vain vision, but the saint that presides over the blessed well, which appeared to me to-night; her signs and mutterings to me were of danger—danger, Flora, from the sea; and what danger can come from the sea which aims not at your peace; for, alas! you know how many ladies sighed that day you became a bride.'

"'Foolish old woman!' replied the lady Flora, 'do you doubt Maclean's faith, or mine? Go look in the well again, and see a more agreeable vision.'

"'It shall not need,' replied Eupheme; 'the vision is about to be fulfilled.' As she spoke, a low, deep, sullen sound came rolling landward; the waves began to rise and sparkle in the moonlight, and as Lady Flora rose and stood at her window, the foaming spray was thrown as high as the turret tops.

"'Hark!' she said, in a low voice, 'yonder is the thunder.'

"'Ay, it is thunder, lady,' answered her attendant; 'but it is of man, not of God; it is the sound of

artillery, and intimates that souls are in jeopardy. See, a beautiful ship driven towards us by the demon of the blast! But the mermaids of Mull shall soon sing in her timbers as she lies in the bosom of the deep.'

"'Now all the hosts of heaven forbid!' exclaimed Lady Flora, stretching her hand to a silver call with which she summoned her attendants; 'Maclean and his brave people shall save these perishing souls.'

"'You will perish then yourself, lady,' said Eupheme, laying her hand on the silver pipe. 'Shall I speak as prophetess never spoke before—I mean plainly? That ship is one of the Spanish Armada, and holds in her bosom the sole enemy of your peace. In that ship sails an Andalusian princess, who, twelve months ago, dreamed in a dream, that a chief of heroic look and beauty appeared to her, and holding out his hand, saved her from the sea, and crowned her a queen among his isles. How I know it, you may guess if you choose,—but that chief is the Maclean: thither is she come, on the wings of love, and in her father's ship, to seek and find him; and when she comes, such is her beauty, that to see her is to love her.'

"'I fear her not,' exclaimed Lady Flora; 'let her come, and welcome in all her loveliness; I can trust in the honour of him who preferred me to all the other dames of Caledonia.'

"'Then, lady, you are lost!' said Eupheme, with a sigh; 'Maclean is fated to love her, should he once behold her; but he shall not behold her! All the winds of Mull and Tobermorie obey me.'

"'Stir not—speak not, I order you, on your life, old woman,' exclaimed Lady Flora; and as she spoke, the ship, urged to supernatural speed, came plunging into the bay, and anchored close to the castle wall.

"The chief of the Macleans, as the ship anchored in the bay, took to his barge, and offered his services on board.

"'Our mistress,' said one, in the Spanish tongue, 'will be on deck in an instant, and thank you in person.'

"As these words were uttered, a young lady, of surpassing beauty, clad in green velvet, bedropt with gold, and carrying this little silver instrument in her hand came suddenly on deck. Her colour went and came the moment that she saw him; her knees shook, and had he not supported her in his arms, she would have fallen. She whispered a word or two to an aged attendant, on which all the ship's company raised a shout of—'He is found, he is found!' And looking in Maclean's face, she said, 'The vision did not flatter thee. I come to make thee a prince, and carry thee from this cold, barren isle, to the fruitful vales and vine-clad hills of my native Andalusia.'

"'Such was the influence of her melodious tongue, and large lustrous eyes,' said the chief, in relating the wild tale in after years, 'that I saw nothing but her, and all memory of my own Flora Macdonald vanished.'

"The Lady Flora fainted as she beheld this from her window; while Eupheme turned east, and west, and

north, and south, and muttered words in the Mull tongue, at which those who strove to restore their mistress shuddered. The wind, awakened by accident, or by her spells, rushed suddenly down, and the ship of the princess spun round for a moment, like a feather on an eddy, and went down, head foremost.

"'Thou shalt be burnt for this deed,' exclaimed Lady Flora, as she recovered, and heard the loud cry of so many souls perishing.

"'I care not,' said the witch, for my chief is safe. Here comes the Maclean with the Spanish syren's harp, and not a hair of his head is moist.'

"My tale is done, sire. Though some would add, that when the late divers visited the sunken ship, they saw the princess lying asleep, in all her virgin beauty, on deck, with two mermaidens keeping watch over her slumbers."

THE FLOWER "HEART'S-EASE."

Purple and gold
Are my kingly hues;
But 'tis not with kings
That my lot I choose.

H.

THE MOTHERLESS.

BY SARAH STICKNEY.

Why do I love the motherless?
  Oh! canst thou ask of me,
Who never knew the joys that bless
  A cherished infancy;
Who only felt the dreary void,
  The sadness of my lot,
The bitterness of hopes destroyed
  By those who knew them not?

I was a dark and moody child,
  They thought my feelings cold;
But had a mother fondly smiled,
  The truth had all been told;
The truth that closed my aching eyes
  On many a burning tear;
That in my bosom checked the sighs,
  And sealed my lips with fear.

I might have been all tenderness,
Had such to me been shown;
And less neglected, sorrowing less,
A sweeter child had grown;
But when I would have thrown my arms
Around some gentle neck,
Then cold, cold words, and wild alarms
My fervent soul would check.

I was not lovely, light, nor gay,
Nor formed to be beloved;
And thus they chid me at my play,
My childish sports reproved:
They made me what I ne'er had been,
But for their stern control;
I thought, sometimes, they might have seen
The anguish of my soul.

I was not lovely, and I knew
My step was void of grace;
That youthful beauty never threw
Its magic o'er my face;
All this too truly could I prove
By many a slighted kiss;
But oh! I thought a mother's love
Would have forgiven me this.

And then I poured on senseless things,
That could not laugh to scorn,
All, all the fond imaginings,
Of young Affection born.
I loved the trees, the summer flowers,
The wild bird's evening lay,
The lonely dell, the silent hours,
That glide in dreams away.

The lamb deserted by the herd
Companion found in me;
I cherished many a wounded bird,
And oft I wept to see
The drooping wing, the pilfered nest,
Hope's sunny schemes o'erthrown,
The pining of the lonely breast,
That was too like my own.

'Tis thus I love the motherless,
Their sorrows seek to share,
Their lone uncherished lot to bless,
Even with a sister's care;
With that fond yearning of the heart
None ever felt for me,
To dry the tear, and soothe the smart
Of joyless infancy.

THE LISBONESE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PROVOST OF BRUGES."

It is many years ago, yet the recollection is in my mind as fresh as the occurrences of yesterday. I was standing on the terrace in front of Greenwich Hospital, looking at the wrecks of the gallant fellows who had, for so many years, borne their country's flag through "the battle and the breeze," now hobbling about with such limbs as fate had left or the doctor supplied them; and exercising all my ingenuity to trace, through their quaint sober uniforms and venerable grey hairs, the fiery heroes of a thousand combats. The struggle in the Peninsula was then at its height, and a vessel with Portuguese colours was passing up the river. I made some remark on the subject to an old pensioner who was standing by me. He was a very old man, with a quiet expression of benevolence in his face, and something in his manner that seemed to stamp him a shade above the common sailor.

"Ah, sir!" said he, "I have seen strange things in

the country she comes from! I was at Lisbon in the great earthquake in fifty-five."

"Indeed!" said I. "That was an event not to be forgotten."

"It was, sir; but from more causes than the earthquake,—to *me*, that is."

"How so?" I inquired.

"Why, you see, sir, it's quite a story; but, poor thing, I like to talk about her; so, if you'll sit down on this bench, you shall have it from first to last.

"As I told you, I was in the city when the earthquake began, and a terrible thing it was to be sure. The houses swayed up and down, just for all the world like a ship at anchor in a heavy swell; and then it got worse and worse till down they came, first one, then another, then a whole street; and the poor creatures ran out by thousands, and the walls fell and buried them, and the earth opened and swallowed them;—and the noise was like that of the last day—crashes of ruin and destruction—shrieks, groans, and prayers, all mixed up in one horrible din, till you could not tell which was loudest. Many a voice was then lifted to heaven that never prayed before,—and the unfinished prayer was buried with them in the openings of the earth or the ruins of the houses. Some went mad and stood and laughed as the roofs nodded above them,—and the laugh was stopped as the prayer had been. Some stood still with children in their arms, hugging them to their bosoms with their heads bent over them, till they found a common grave. And then the fire

began; for the tapers at the altars, and the lights in the houses set fire to whatever fell on them, till a thousand flames completed the horror of that dreadful day.

"For my own part, staggering along the heaving streets, and, at every other step, thrown on the ground, with bricks and stones rattling round me on all sides, I scrambled, I did not know where. It was not exactly fear, for a British sailor, you know, sir, is not used to lose his bearings from such a cause; but the darkness, and the dust, and the smoke made such a confusion, one born in the place could not have found his way, to say nothing of a stranger. However, as I was saying, scrambling to make my way somewhere, any where indeed where there was fresh air and no houses, I ran against a lady with a child in her arms. She was young, and as beautiful a creature as ever I set my eyes on. She hurried past me, and, the next moment, the earth gave a shudder, and I heard a scream louder than all the uproar. I thought it must be she, and turned round; when I found the earth had split in a great chasm between us, even on the very spot where, a moment before, we had both been standing; and there she was, balancing upon the brink of it, with the child held up above her head. The ground was crumbling under her, but where I stood it was still firm. I held out my arms—she said something to me in Portuguese which I did not understand, but I knew she was asking me to take care of the child; and I told her I would—I swore it! Nature, you know,

sir, is alike in all languages—so she understood me, and giving one wild kiss to the little one's lips, with desperate strength she threw it across the chasm. She saw the child was caught in my arms, and she clasped her hands and threw up her beautiful eyes to heaven, when a fresh shake of the earth tumbled down a large building behind her, and she rolled with it into the yawning gulf—never to rise again in this world. Perhaps you may imagine what I felt—what I *did* I do not know; but, after an hour of wandering and escapes more than I could count, I found myself in the open country, and, for the present at least, safe. I went on my knees to thank God, and bade the little creature do the same; but she did not stir, and, as I laid her on the grass, I found a deep wound on her head, and the blood clotting her long beautiful black hair; but still she breathed. To make short of a long story, we got at last on board the ship again, and the doctor, after examining the wound, said there was no harm done, and that she would soon be as well as ever.

"She was a lovely little girl of about six years old, and as we were to sail directly, they wanted to send her ashore again, to try if any of her family could be found. But I thought of the vow I had made to her poor mother, which I am sure she understood; and I determined not to part with the sick wounded little thing, that I loved now as if she had been my sister; so I spoke to the captain, who was a very good man, and, moreover, had children of his own, and he agreed to let me take her to England with us. Well, sir,

home we got, and it was astonishing how soon the little darling began to speak English. You could see she liked it, bless her! And now, as she was a young lady,—for she said her father, who had died about a year before, was Don somebody or other,—it was such a long name we never any of us could speak it, so we told her to call herself Jackson, which is my name; but, somehow, she always liked her long Portuguese name best, so you see, sir, how early prejudices grow —in foreigners, that is to say.—Well, as I said, seeing she was a young lady, and we had undertaken her education, I thought we ought to do it as genteelly as we could; so I took her to a cousin of mine who kept a public house in Wapping, a very nice motherly woman—poor Sally!—she's dead and gone too, long ago!

"Well, sir, she treated her as if she had been her own child; and because she thought the company of the house was too rough and rude for her, she sent her to a very genteel boarding-school in Mile End, and it was wonderful how the little thing took to her learning; so that when I came back from my next voyage, she could not only speak English quite well, but read any book she saw. And there I found that with her little pocket money she had bought Portuguese books, and, at all her spare time, used to be poring over them, instead of playing like other children. Poor thing! it was the only tie that was left between her and her native land; for it is a strange thing, sir, but I've often found foreigners, even Frenchmen, love their

own country just as well as if it had been old England!

"Well, sir, years passed on, and she was sixteen, and a sweeter or more beautiful creature you never set eyes on. She was as kind and gentle as an angel, and so fond of me! and I am sure I loved her better than my own life,—not in the way of sweethearting, for though I was a pretty looking fellow enough then, nobody could forget for a moment that she was a young lady. But then I had saved her life, you know, sir,—and we used to talk about her poor mother that was gone; and then she made me learn a little Portuguese that she might speak in her own tongue to me; for her father's land seemed always uppermost in her thoughts. At last I joined a merchant ship that was to sail for Lisbon, and then the long-nursed wish of her heart came out, and she begged so hard to go with me, that I could not find courage to refuse her, but got her a passage in the vessel. And oh, sir! the grief that there was among the women when she went! You know, sir, they are kind, soft-hearted creatures, and I thought they never would have done crying. However, go we did, and a very pretty voyage we had.

"When we came in sight of Lisbon, I shall never forget how the poor dear looked. She was as pale as a ghost, and trembled all over; and while her eyes seemed to devour the shore, her lips were white and quivering, murmuring Portuguese words, that I could not catch the meaning of, except now and then her mother's name. Well, sir, to make short of it, we

landed, and I got leave to go with her over the town, to see if we could find any body we knew. Poor dear, I thought she would have fainted when she set her foot on the land, she trembled so; for she was a weak delicate little creature. But oh—what a change we found since we left there! Where the earthquake had been, there was the grand Black Horse Square, and all the straight regular streets that the marquis of Pombal had built, and we did not know where we were. However, she soon began to ask, and found that her uncle, Don ——, confound his long name, I never could think of it, and I am sure it is not worth remembering—but he was living in a grand house they pointed out to us—so there we went. Well, sir, we found him with a parcel of fine servants round him, but we did not care for that, and we told him who we were; and,—would you think it, sir?—he would not believe us! The fact was, it did not suit him to believe us; for, supposing her dead, he had seized on all her property, and was enjoying it. So the old scoundrel called us impostors—called me and his own brother's beautiful child impostors, and threatened to send for a constable! You may guess my blood began to rise, and as for her, poor thing! she stood speechless and trembling; for, in her innocence, she had never dreamt of this, nor, to tell the truth, had I either. Well, just at this moment a great old mastiff dog came into the room. 'Oh, Basto!' cried she, bursting for the first time into a flood of tears, 'I am sure *you* don't forget me!' Would you believe it, sir?—the old brute looked at her and growled

—did not know his old master's child! No English dog would have done that, sir! However, she was so overcome at the sight of her father's old dog, that she threw her beautiful body on the ground, and clasping her white arms round the beast, hugged him to her heart. He bit her, sir! I can hardly speak it—but he bit her! I saw his teeth enter her soft flesh—I saw the blood trickle down! I can't tell you, sir, what I felt at that moment. Even after all these years my blood is in a boil talking of it. I flew at the beast, and before you could count two, dashed his brains out.

"The old Don swore in Portuguese—I stormed in English. It was well some of the servants got between me and him. I believe I knocked down two or three of them, but I don't know. I caught the darling up in my arms, for she had fainted, and I carried her to the ship. We put her to bed, but nothing could recover her from the shock. There was all her little dream of ten years gone in a moment—and so cruelly gone too! She was struck to the heart. She lay quite still and noticed nothing. She never cried, nor spoke, nor ate, nor slept. I watched by her day and night, and every day she got weaker and weaker,—hang it, sir—I can't talk about it—she died! At first I said the earth of that rascally country never should hold her. But then I thought how she had loved it, and that perhaps she would not be happy any where else;—so, as the priests would not let her be buried in consecrated ground, because we had made a regular built christian of her, I, and some of my shipmates, (for

they all loved her) clubbed together and bought leave of a farmer to bury her on the side of a hill by his garden. So we laid her in the ground with her face towards England; for I thought she would like, poor thing! to be turned to that land that had been a home to her, and would have been again when her own refused her; and we said a prayer over her—a parson might have said a better, perhaps, but not an honester, I am certain:—and we planted the sweetest flowers we could find round her grave; and giving the farmer money, made him swear a solemn oath never to neglect it, or let it go to ruin—and I believe he kept his promise. Talk of consecrated ground, sir!—that girl's body would have consecrated Constantinople!"

TO A LADY,

Who hinted her wish for a new Thimble and a copy of Verses.

I SEND a thimble
For fingers nimble,
Which I hope it will fit when you try it:
It will last you long,
If it's half as strong
As the hint which you gave me to buy it.

H.

YOUTH AND BEAUTY.

Will any wandering sylph of air,
Some summer shape with silver pinions,
Especial guardian of the fair,
But stoop from Oberon's dominions;

And tell me what those two sweet girls
With all their little wits are doing;
Frolic and wild as new-caught squirrels,
Yet soft as turtles caged and cooing?

One, if I judge her by her glances,
—A star might envy them their hue—
Is made for Love's divine romances,
In Nature's album writ—a *blue*.

The other, with those eyes of jet,
And lip upturned with pretty scorn,
I'll wager, flirts a little yet,
Before her wedding-ring is worn.

The *blue* is thinking of the sermon
Preached by the curate just imported,
Shining and sweet as dew on Hermon,
A pastor meek, not yet *consort*-ed.

The other, with the diamond eyes,
Is thinking of the county ball;
What new M. P. shall be her prize,
What rival queens before her fall.

The *blue*, I'll swear, is Isabel,
Sweet title of the true romantic,
Fit for some convent's vine-wreathed cell,
Or sunset isle in the Atlantic.

Her sister, at a guess, is Charlotte,
With life and love in every feature;
Fond of the soldier and his scarlet, —
I'll never blame her taste; — 'tis Nature.

O! Youth and Beauty, what gay dreams
Play round your waking and your sleeping!
Like atoms in the noon-day beams,
Like glances from those sparklers peeping.

Yet, Youth and Beauty, some half dozen
Of those same heavy things called years,
May see those glowing pulses frozen,
Those silken lashes fringed with tears.

Sweet babes will come, — the mamma's taxes, —
And roses go with each new comer;
E'en Love his bow *sometimes* relaxes; —
The warmest year is not all summer.

Yet not for you, my pretty girls,
Should life its seamy side display;
Such coral lips, encasing pearls,
Would make *my* every month, a May.

Had I but one of you, my doves,
I'd shut the door on wind and weather;
Make life as downy as our loves,
And wing for Paradise together.

ARNO.

SONNET.

BY C. WEBBE.

THE tyrannous Winter his stern rule resumes,
And with his horrors chills courageous bloods;
Sweeps the fair vales with devastating floods;
Curtains the sun with clouds and awful glooms,
So that no light the unconscious day illumes;
Lets loose the up-gathered winds to tear the woods;
Blinds the bright hours with dimness; and intrudes
The night ere eve is gone—the morn to darkness dooms.
Stilly as motes descend the summer beams,
The quiet snow sinks through the air, and falls:
Sullen and silent swell the deepening streams;
As the frost builds their banks with treacherous walls.
The heavens and earth are hid; and not a sound
Of living thing disturbs the death-like peace profound.

CHARLOTTE DE MONTMORENCI.

A Tale of the French Chronicles.

BY AGNES STRICKLAND.

It was the second morning after Charlotte de Montmorenci's first ball; but the enchantments with which that memorable evening had been fraught still floated before her youthful fancy. She had thought of nothing but the Louvre and its glittering pageantry all day; and her pillow had been haunted with dreams of Henri Quatre, and the gay and gallant nobles of his court who had vied with each other in offering the most intoxicating homage to her charms. Charlotte de Montmorenci was the most beautiful girl in France, and the sensation produced by her first appearance at court, was enough to dazzle the mind of a damsel only just emancipated from the sober restraints of a conventual education. She had danced the *pavon** with Henri himself, who had been lavish, on that occasion, of the seductive flattery which he was so well skilled to whisper in a lady's ear. Charlotte had

* Or peacock dance, an ancient minuet.

found this incense only too agreeable; but the pleasure with which she was disposed to listen to the compliments of Royalty, received something very like a check from the impertinent *espionage* of a pair of penetrating dark eyes, which, whenever she raised her own, she encountered, fixed upon her with looks expressive rather of reproof than admiration.

How dared any eyes address language so displeasing to the reigning beauty of the evening, especially when her affianced lover, the sprightly heir of Bassompierre, appeared highly gratified with the brilliant success that had attended her presentation at court? Bassompierre was the handsomest and most admired of all the peers of France. He stood very high in the favour of his sovereign; and so generally irresistible was he considered by the ladies, that his choice of Mademoiselle de Montmorenci had entitled her to the envy of half the females of the court, who had vainly endeavoured to fix his roving heart.

Charlotte, in accepting him, had driven a hundred lovers to despair; for the beautiful and wealthy daughter of the most illustrious peer of France, from the moment she quitted her convent, had been surrounded by suitors. The provoking dark eyes, whose impertinent observations had annoyed and offended her in the royal *salon de danse*, did not belong to any of these luckless gallants. It would have been difficult, perhaps, for any lady, however fair, to reject the addresses of a man with such a pair of eyes, if their owner had rendered them as eloquent in im-

passioned pleading as they were in reproof. These unauthorised monitors, too, pertained not to the grave and stately Sully, or any of the elder worthies of the court, whom wisdom, virtues, and mature years might entitle to play the moralist, but to a pale, melancholy stripling, who engaged the attention of no one in the glittering circle but the neglected queen. With her he appeared to be on terms of affectionate confidence; and it was from behind her chair that he directed those glances which excited the surprise and displeasure of the fair Montmorenci.

The expression of those eyes, to say nothing of their singular beauty, haunted Charlotte after her return to the hotel de Montmorenci; and she regretted that she had not asked Bassompierre who the person was that had conducted himself in so extraordinary a manner. She had thought of propounding the inquiry more than once during the evening, but was unwilling to call her lover's attention to a circumstance that was mortifying to her self-love. She fell asleep with the determination of amusing Bassompierre, when he called to pay his *devoir* to her the next morning, with a whimsical description of the pale dark-eyed boy; trusting that her powers of mimicry would elicit from her sprightly lover the name of the person she sketched without betraying her curiosity.

The following day, at as early an hour as courtly etiquette permitted, the salons of the Duchess de Montmorenci were crowded with visitors of the highest rank, all eager to offer their compliments to her

beautiful daughter. He of the mysterious dark eyes, and François Bassompierre, were however not among the visitors. Charlotte was surprised and piqued at this neglect on the part of her lover, and resolved to punish him by a very haughty reception the next time he entered her presence; but he neither came nor sent to inquire after her health that day.

The next morning the Duke de Montmorenci, after his return from the king's levee, said to his daughter:—

"Charlotte, the king has forbidden your marriage with young Bassompierre."

"Vastly impertinent of the king, I think! What reason does he give for this unprecedented act of tyranny?"

"That you are worthy of a more illustrious alliance."

"I wish King Henri would mind his own business, instead of interfering in mine," said Charlotte angrily.

"My dear child, you are ungrateful to our gracious sovereign, who has expressed his intention of marrying you to his own kinsman, the first prince of the blood."

"And who may he be?"

"The young Prince de Condé, the illustrious descendant of a line of heroes, and, after Henri's infant sons, the heir-presumptive to the throne of France. Think of that, my daughter!"

"I will not think of anything but Bassompierre," replied Charlotte resolutely. "It is very barbarous

of the king to endeavour to separate those whom love has united."

"Love!" repeated the duke. "Bah! you cannot say that you seriously love young Bassompierre."

"I think him very handsome and agreeable, at any rate; and I am determined to marry him, and no one else. Ah! I comprehend the reason of his absence now. He has been forbidden to see me by that cruel Henri."

"You are right, Charlotte; it is in obedience to the injunctions of the sovereign, that Bassompierre has discontinued his visits to you. You will see him no more."

"Have I not said that I will not resign him?"

"Yes, my child, but he has resigned you."

"Resigned me!" exclaimed Charlotte, starting from her chair with a burst of indignant surprise; "Nay, that is impossible; unless, indeed, you have told him that I am faithless, or that I wish him to sacrifice his happiness in order to contract a nobler alliance."

"On the word of a Montmorenci, he has been told nothing, except that it was the king's pleasure that he should relinquish his engagement with you, and marry the heiress of the Duke d'Aumale."

"How, marry another? But I know Bassompierre too well to believe he will act so basely."

"My poor Charlotte, you are little acquainted with the disposition of men of the world and courtiers, or you would not imagine the possibility of your hand

being placed in competition with the loss of the royal favour. Bassompierre, instead of acting like a romantic boy, and forfeiting the king's regard for the sake of a pretty girl, who cares not a whit more for him than he does for her, has cancelled his contract with Charlotte Marguerite de Montmorenci, and affianced himself to Mademoiselle d'Aumale."

"The heartless minion!" cried Charlotte, with flashing eyes; "would that I had some means of evincing my scorn and contempt of his baseness!"

"The surest way of doing that, my child, will be to accept the illustrious consort whom the king has been graciously pleased to provide for you."

"I think so too," replied Charlotte, after a pause; "but what sort of a man is the Prince de Condé?"

"He is said to possess great and noble qualities," said the duke; "but he is at present only in his minority, and is withal of a reserved disposition. There is, however, no doubt but the companionship of a wife of your brilliant wit and accomplishments will draw out the fine talents with which this amiable prince is endowed, and render him worthy of his distinguished ancestry."

"I confess," observed Charlotte, "that I should prefer a man whose claims to my respect were of a less adventitious character. I should like to be the wife of a hero."

"So you will, in all probability, if you marry Henri de Condé. He is the last representative of a line whose heritage is glory, and of whose alliance

even a Montmorenci might be proud," returned her father.

He then hastened to communicate to the king the agreeable intelligence that his daughter had offered no objections to a marriage with his youthful ward and kinsman the Prince de Condé.

"It is well," replied the monarch; "I will myself present the Prince de Condé to his fair bride, and the contract shall be signed in my presence this evening."

The Duke and Duchess de Montmorenci were charmed at the idea of an alliance that offered to their only daughter no very remote prospect of sharing the throne of France. As for the fair Charlotte, her pride alone having been wounded by the desertion of Bassompierre, she took the readiest way of dissipating any chagrin his defection had caused, by making *une grande toilette* for the reception of the new candidate for her hand. So long was she engaged in this interesting occupation, that a pompous and continuous flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of the royal *cortége* at the hotel de Montmorenci, before she had concluded the arrangement of ruff and fardingale to her own satisfaction.

Her entrance was greeted with a suppressed murmur of admiration, and the graceful manner with which she advanced to offer her homage to the sovereign, excited fresh applause.

"Ah, my cousin," cried the enamoured monarch, turning to the Prince de Condé, "what an enviable

man am I not about to render you, in uniting you to so charming a bride! By the mass, if I were a bachelor, I must have kept her for myself, and laid my crown at her feet; and, even as it is, I feel more pain than I am willing to confess in bestowing her upon another."

Henri Quatre felt the hand of the youthful beauty, which he had retained in his own, while addressing this high-flown compliment to her future husband, tremble in his grasp. Charlotte was conscious that her sovereign was availing himself of this opportunity of pressing her fairy fingers, with more ardour than became the paternal character he had assumed. A deep blush overspread her countenance as the question suggested itself to her mind, "Wherefore has he taken so much pains to separate me from François Bassompierre?" and, at the same moment, she stole a furtive glance at him, whose destiny was, from that hour, to be so closely connected with her own, and encountered the dark penetrating eyes, whose scrutiny had so much disturbed her at the Louvre. They were still bent on her face with the same grave mournful expression, as if intended to pierce into her very soul. Those beautiful but searching eyes belonged to Henri de Condé. Scarcely had she made this startling discovery, when the king, assuming the imposing characteristics of majesty, which so much better became his mature age than the light and reckless tone of gallantry in which he had before indulged, presented the Prince de Condé to her in due form. Then,

putting her hand into that of his pale, thoughtful kinsman, he pronounced the patriarchal blessing of the *suzerain* on their approaching union.

Charlotte started, and impulsively drew back from the icy touch of the cold hand that then faintly closed on hers. There was nothing of tenderness, or encouragement, in the sternly-composed features of Condé; no trait of that silently expressive homage, which is so dear to the heart of woman; nothing, in fact, to compensate for the absence of manly beauty and courtly grace in a very young man. Though the habits of politeness and self-control, which are so early impressed upon the daughters of the great, prevented the fair Montmorenci from betraying her secret dissatisfaction, she ventured to direct an appealing look to her parents, as if to implore their interference; but her mother turned away, and her father gave her a glance which intimated that it was too late to recede.

The marriage contract was read, and subscribed by the king in his threefold capacity of *suzerain*, or paramount liege-lord of the contracting parties; and also as the next of kin and guardian of the illustrious bridegroom, who was an orphan and a minor. It was next witnessed by the parents of the bride. The pen was then presented to the Prince de Condé. He paused, and appeared irresolute; darted a glance of suspicious inquiry at the king, and bent one of his searching looks on the face of her to whom he was required to plight himself. Mademoiselle de Mont-

morenci was unconscious of his scrutiny. Overpowered by the strangeness and agitating nature of the scene, she stood, with downcast eyes and a varying colour, leaning her clasped hands for support on the shoulder of her only brother, afterwards so celebrated in the annals of France, as the illustrious and unfortunate Henri de Montmorenci. Never had she appeared so charming as at that moment, when the feminine emotions of fear and shame had lent their softening shade to beauty, which was, perhaps, too dazzling in its faultless perfection, and calculated rather to excite wonder and admiration, than to inspire tenderness. The stern expression of Condé's features relaxed as he gazed upon her, and observed the virgin hues of "celestial rosy red," and "angel whiteness," that came and went in her fair cheek. His countenance brightened, he took the pen with sudden animation, and, with a firm hand, and in bold free characters, subscribed his name to the contract.

"Charlotte Marguerite de Montmorenci, your signature is required," said the duke her father to the evidently reluctant damsel.

"I have a great mind not to sign," said she, in a confidential tone aside to her brother, who was two years younger than herself.

"Are you minded to offer an unprovoked affront to an honourable gentleman, and to afford a triumph to a recreant lover?" was the whispered response of the youthful heir of Montmorenci.

Charlotte advanced to the table, and signed the in-

strument. She received somewhat coolly the congratulations with which her friends and relations overwhelmed her; and when the folding doors of the saloon were thrown open, and the king gave his hand to the Duchess de Montmorenci to lead her into the banqueting-room, where a sumptuous entertainment had been laid out in honour of the occasion, she took the offered arm of the man to whom she had just affianced herself, with an averted head, and a sigh escaped her.

"I fear," said he, in a low voice, "that you have been compelled to do violence to your feelings in signing that contract."

These were the first words that Condé had ever addressed to his beautiful *fiancée*, and there was a deep and tender melody in the rich but melancholy tones of his voice, that thrilled to her heart not less strangely than the penetrating glances of his fine dark eyes had previously done.

"I shall not hate him quite so much as I thought I should," was her mental response to this considerate question; but instead of answering the prince with reciprocal frankness, she replied with some *hauteur*—

"I am not accustomed to do any thing on compulsion, Monsieur."

It was now Condé's turn to sigh—he did so from the bottom of his heart; and Charlotte felt angry with herself for the perverseness which had prompted her to repel his first advance towards a confidential understanding.

A ball succeeded the banquet. The Prince de Condé did not dance, though reminded that courtly etiquette required that he should at least tread one measure with his bride elect; and Charlotte found a more gallant, if not a more suitable partner, in her admiring sovereign, with whom she once more danced the graceful *pavon*, and bounded, with flying feet, through the light *courant*, heedless of the grave looks of disapprobation with which her vivacious enjoyment of her favourite amusement was regarded by him to whom her hand was now plighted.

An early day had been fixed by the king for the nuptials of Bassompierre and Mademoiselle D'Aumale. Charlotte expressed a wish that her marriage should precede theirs, and, in the meantime, the Prince de Condé availed himself of the privilege of a betrothed lover, in passing much of his time at the hotel de Montmorenci; but when there, his attention appeared more engrossed by the parents and the youthful brother of his *fiancée*, than by herself. In conversation with them, the "shy reserved boy of Condé," as Henri Quartre was accustomed to call his studious cousin, could be eloquent, graceful, and even witty. He possessed talents of the finest order; his mind had been highly cultivated, and there was sound sense, and beautiful morality in every thing he said. Charlotte, seated at her tapestry frame, beside her mother, could not help listening, at first with girlish curiosity, but, by degrees, with profound attention, to the observations which he addressed to her brother on

the course of history he was reading; and when she saw his pale cheek kindling with the glow of virtuous and heroic feeling, and his dark, penetrating eyes beaming with intellectual brightness, she blushed at the thought that those eyes should have witnessed so much vanity and frivolity in herself.

Sometimes she felt mortified that he addressed so little of his conversation to her; and then, without reflecting that she had chilled and repelled him in the first instance, she was piqued into a haughty imitation of his reserve, when alone with him; and when surrounded by the gay crowd of her courtly admirers, she endeavoured, by the exercise of coquetry, to shake his equanimity, and provoke him either into a quarrel, or an acknowledgment of love.

She was convinced that he had ceased to regard her with indifference; for she had more than once detected his lustrous dark eyes fixed upon her with that intense expression of passionate feeling, which can never be mistaken by its object; yet he had resolutely refrained from giving to that feeling words; and it seemed hard to the most beautiful girl in France, that she should be wedded, unwooed, by him of all others, from whom she most desired to hear the language of love.

"If I could but once see this youthful stoic at my feet, I should feel prouder of that triumph than of all the homage which has been offered to me this night by 'him of the white plume,' and his gallant peers," sighed Charlotte to herself, as she was returning from

the last ball at the Louvre at which she was to appear as Mademoiselle de Montmorenci.

It was the most brilliant she had ever attended; and though on the eve of her bridal, Charlotte ventured on the hazardous experiment of exciting the jealousy of her betrothed. She succeeded only too well, and Condé, unable to conceal his emotion, quitted the royal salon at an early hour. All the interest that the beautiful and admired Mademoiselle de Montmorenci had taken in the gay scene, departed with the pale agitated stripling, whom every one present suspected of being the object of her aversion; and pleading a head-ache to excuse her from fulfilling her engagement of dancing a second time with the king, she retired almost immediately afterwards.

On entering her own apartment her attendant presented her with a billet. It was from the Prince de Condé—the first he had ever addressed to her.

To every woman of sensibility it is delightful to see her name traced, for the first time, by the hand of the object of her secret regard. Who can describe the sweet suspense of that agitating moment which must intervene ere the seal can be broken, and the thrilling mystery unfolded? Alas, for Charlotte de Montmorenci! Her recent conduct rendered her feelings on this occasion the very reverse of those blissful emotions. Her colour faded, her knees shook, and it was with difficulty that her agitated hand could open the letter. It contained only these words:—

"CHARLOTTE DE MONTMORENCI,

"Late as it may be when you receive this, I must see you before you retire to rest. You will find me in the east saloon.

"HENRI DE CONDE'."

"Not even the common forms, unmeaning though they be, which courtesy requires, observed in this his first, his only communication to me!" thought Mademoiselle de Montmorenci as she crushed the paper together in her hand. She turned her eyes upon the dial that surmounted her tall dressing glass,—it still wanted five minutes to midnight. Those five minutes decided her destiny. She took the silver lamp from the toilet, and dismissing her damsel, repaired to the appointed trysting place; then, unclosing the door with a tremulous hand, she stood before Condé with a cheek so pale, that when he caught the first glimpse of her dimly shadowed reflection in the cold glassy surface of the mirrored panel, opposite to which he was standing, he absolutely started; so different did she look from the sparkling animated beauty whom he had left, scarcely an hour ago, leading off the dance with Royalty in the glittering salons of the Louvre. Condé had, in fact, neither anticipated her early return home, nor the prompt attention she had paid to his somewhat uncourteous summons; far less was he prepared for indications of softness and sensibility, where he had expected to encounter only coldness and pride. He ad-

vanced a step—one step only—to meet her; then paused, and silently awaited her approach. The glance which Charlotte ventured to steal as she placed her lamp on the marble table at which he stood, revealed to her the air of stern resolve with which his lofty brow was compressed; the only trace of the passionate emotion that had so recently shaken his firm spirit, was a slight redness about his eyes.

"Charlotte de Montmorenci," said he, addressing her in a low deep voice, "I hold in my hand the contract of our betrothment. That contract was signed by you with evident reluctance, and it will cost you no pain to cancel it." He paused, and fixed his dark penetrating eyes on her face as if to demand an answer.

Charlotte tried to speak, but there was a convulsive rising in her throat that prevented articulation. The glittering carcanet that encircled her fair neck appeared, at that moment, to oppress her with an insufferable weight, and to have suddenly tightened almost to suffocation. She drew a deep inspiration, and raising her trembling hands, essayed to unloose the clasp, but in vain. It seemed to her that the hysterical emotion that oppressed her was occasioned by the weight of this costly ornament, and its rich appendages, and that her life depended on her instant release from their pressure; and after a second ineffectual attempt to unclasp the jewelled circlet, she actually turned an imploring glance for help upon the real cause of her distress—her offended lover. Condé's assistance was

promptly accorded; but, either through the intricacy of the spring, or his inexperience in all matters relating to female decorations, or, it might be, that he was at that moment not less agitated than his pale and trembling *fiancée*, his attempts to unclasp the carcanet were as unsuccessful as her own. While thus employed, her silken ringlets were unavoidably mingled with his dark locks; and more than once his brow came in contact with her polished cheek, and when, at last, by an effort of main strength, he succeeded in bursting the fastening of the jewelled collar, she sunk with a convulsive sob into the arms that were involuntarily extended to receive her. For the first time, Condé held that form of perfect loveliness to his bosom, and, forgetful of all the stern resolves that had, for the last few hours, determined him to part with her for ever,—forgetful of pride, anger, jealousy, and reason itself, he covered her cold forehead with passionate kisses, and implored her, by every title of fond endearment, to revive. Those soothing words, those tender caresses, recalled her to a sweet but agitating consciousness; and when she perceived on whose breast she was supported, a burst of tears relieved her full heart, and she sobbed with the vehemence of a child that cannot cease to weep even when the cause of its distress has been removed.

"Speak but one word," cried Condé. "Have I occasioned this emotion—these tears?"

Charlotte could not speak, but her silence was eloquent.

"Nay, but I must be told, in explicit terms, that you love me," cried Condé; "it is a point on which I dare not suffer myself to be deceived."

"Mighty fine!" said the fair Montmorenci, suddenly recovering her vivacity and smiling through her tears, "and so you have the vanity to expect that I am to reverse the order of things, and play the wooer to you, for your more perfect satisfaction, after you have informed me of your obliging intention of cancelling our contract of betrothment."

"Ah, Charlotte! if you did but know how much I have suffered before I could resolve to resign the happiness of calling you mine!"

"Well, if you *are* resolved, I have no more to say," rejoined Charlotte proudly extricating herself from his arms.

"But I have," said Condé, taking her by both her hands, which he retained in spite of one or two perverse attempts to withdraw them. "Fie, this is childish petulance!" cried he, pressing them to his lips; "but, my sweet Charlotte, the moment is past for trifling on either side. These coquetries might have cost us both only too dear." His lip quivered with strong emotion, as he spoke, and the large tears stole from under the downcast lashes of Mademoiselle de Montmorenci. "We have caused each other much pain for want of a little candour," pursued he.

"Why, then, did you not tell me that you loved me?" whispered Charlotte.

"Because I dared not resign my heart into your

keeping before I was assured that I might trust you with my honour."

"Oh, heavens!" exclaimed Charlotte, becoming very pale; "and is it possible that you could doubt?"

"Charlotte, I was too well acquainted with the king's character to behold the undisguised manifestations of his passion for my affianced bride with indifference. The attentions of a royal lover were flattering, I perceived, to the vanity of a young and beautiful woman. The complacency with which they were, at times, received, and my knowledge of the motives which induced the king to break your first engagement with Bassompierre were sufficient to alarm a man of honour," said Condé with a darkening brow.

"You are talking in enigmas, Henri de Condé," rejoined Mademoiselle de Montmorenci.

"If you are ignorant of the fact, that Henri of France separated you from his handsome favourite, because he feared that such a husband would be a formidable rival to himself, no one else is; for Bassompierre has made the particulars of his sovereign's conversation with him on that subject too public for it to remain a matter of doubt. You look incredulous, Charlotte, but you shall hear the very words in which the king made this audacious declaration—'I am, myself,' said he to Bassompierre, 'madly in love with your beautiful Montmorenci.'"

"Ha! did he, a married man, dare to make such an acknowledgment?"

"Yes, Charlotte; and, moreover, impudently ad-

ded—'If she loves you, I shall detest you. You must give up either her or me. You will not of course risk the loss of my favour. I shall marry her to my cousin Condé.' Yes, Charlotte, the plain 'shy boy of Condé,' as he generally styles me, was designed for the honour of being this husband of convenience; but had I known his guileful project at the time, when he required me to sign the contract, not all the power of France, nor even the influence of your charms, should have bribed me to subscribe that paper."

"It is not now irrevocable," said Charlotte, proudly.

"It is if you are willing to accede to the conditions on which I am ready to join in its fulfilment."

"Name them."

"You must see the king no more after our marriage."

"That will be no sacrifice; and, after your communication, I could not look upon him without indignation. How little did I imagine that such baseness could sully the glory of him of whom fame has spoken such bright things!"

"Charlotte, it is his prevailing foible. The sin that was unchecked in youth, gained strength in middle age, and now amounts to madness. There will be no security for our wedded happiness if we remain in his dominions; but can I ask you to forsake friends and country for me?" said Condé.

"Shall I not find all these things, and more also, in the husband of my heart?" returned Charlotte, tenderly.

"Ah, Charlotte! can you forgive my ungentle doubts?" said Condé, throwing himself at her feet.

"Yes, for they are proofs of the sincerity of your affection; and had you been less jealous of my honour, I should not have loved you so well," said she. "From this hour we are as one; and it will be the happiness of my life to resign myself to your guidance."

"Then, my sweet Charlotte, I must, for the sake of the fading roses on these fair cheeks, dismiss you to your pillow, without farther parlance," returned Condé. They exchanged a mute caress, and parted.

The marriage was celebrated with royal pomp on the following day, at high noon, in the church of Notre Dame. Condé received his lovely bride from the hand of his royal rival; but the king's exultation in the success of the deep laid scheme, by which he had separated the object of his lawless passion from her first lover, to unite her with one from whom he vainly imagined he should have little to fear, was of brief duration. The nuptial festivities received a sudden interruption on the following morning, in consequence of the disappearance of both bride and bridegroom; and what was stranger still, it was soon discovered that they had eloped together. The good people of Paris were thrown into the most vivacious amazement at an event so entirely without parallel, either in history, poetry, or romance, as the first prince of the blood running away with his own wife; and their astonishment increased, when the circum-

stances of this lawful abduction transpired, by which it appeared that the Prince de Condé, accompanied by his illustrious bride, quitted their chamber an hour before dawn, and that he had actually carried her off, riding behind him on a pillion, disguised in the grey frieze cloak and hood of a farmer's wife.

The enamoured king, transported with rage at having been thus outwitted by the boy-bridegroom, gave orders for an immediate pursuit. The wedded lovers were, however, beyond his reach. They had crossed the Spanish frontier before their route was traced, and Philip the Third afforded them a refuge in his dominions.

The refusal of that monarch to give up these illustrious fugitives, produced a declaration of war from Henri. He was, in fact, so pertinacious in his attempts to obtain possession of the object of his lawless passion, that it was not till after his death that Condé ventured to return, with his lovely wife, from the voluntarily exile to which they had devoted themselves as a refuge from dishonour. The splendid talents and noble qualities of Henri de Condé have obtained for him so distinguished a place in the annals of his country, that the title of the "Great Condé" would undoubtedly have pertained to him, if the renown of his illustrious son, by Charlotte de Montmorenci, had not, in after years, transcended his own.

History has, with her usual partiality, passed lightly over this dark spot in the character of the gay, the gallant, the chivalric Henri Quatre, without be-

stowing a single comment on the lofty spirit of honourable independence that characterised the conduct of his youthful kinsman on this trying occasion; and has left wholly unnoticed the virtue and conjugal heroism of the high-born beauty, who nobly preferred sharing the poverty and exile of her husband to all the pomp and distinctions that were in the gift of a royal lover.

A SUMMER SCENE.

BY C. WEBBE.

It is the burning month of June;
The yellow grass below my feet
Rustles dryly with the heat:
The thrush forbears his whistled tune,
And, huddling by a favourite pool,
Seeks a dark corner to be cool.
Vainly from the river's brink
Thirsty cattle reach to drink,
For rivers now to small brooks shrink,
And, till the stream shall fill,
The miller's wheel is still.
The tumbling waters' sound
Would now spread joy around,
But they are summer-bound,
And every water-spring
Is swallowed by the ground.
You hear no murmuring,

Not even of swarming bees :
The summer-browning trees
Like verdant pillars stand,
Lend their still shadows to the land,
And long to feel the breeze.
If a light air but stir,
And breathe as though it were
The west wind's harbinger,
By sultry heat oppressed,
It sinks, compelled to rest.
There's not a breath in all the sky ; —
The clouds like steadfast islands lie,
And they are few, and give no shade ;
Nor, all this morning, have they made
A sign of motion to the eye ;
But where at dawn they huddling stood
Is still their snowy neighbourhood.
O'er all the earth there's not a breath, —
It sleeps as silently as death.
The leaves that scattered yesterday,
They have not moved their width away ;
There still they lie where first they fell.
The wind that, wanton, overblows
The violet and wilding rose,
And wags the silent-tongued harebell,
Sleeps a quiet slumberer ;
So that their odours, warm and soft,
Diffuse not lowlily around,
As though they loved their mother-ground,
And paid sweet worship unto her,

But, mounting undispersed aloft,
Like to a fuming incense rise,
Earth's holiest offering to the skies.
In the old wood that hides the hill
The many-voiced choir is still;
And not a song and not a sound
Breaks the solemn pause profound.
That sun-loving, lively thing
That in the lush-grass loves to run,
And spend his hours in gambolling;
Evades the swelter of the sun,
And stirs not till the evening:
When rising dew the meadow wets,
The quick collision of his wings,
Livelier than clicking castanets,
Through the still valley shrilly rings.
The knotted snake, where heavy kine
In winter poached the watery soil,
Enjoys the sun's intemperate shine,
And, touched, untwists his easy coil,
But is too indolent to stir
Far from the gentle passenger.
Save him, there is no living thing
That crawls, or glides, or spreads the wing,
'Mong all the myriad things that swarm
In Nature's universal farm,
But from the sultry fields has fled,
And all this living world seems dead.
—— Yes, now I reach the river's side,

Where the lank willows spread a shade,
The nimble trout, with sudden glide,
When they behold my shadow dim
Hang darkening o'er the water's brim,
Into their oozy caverns slide,
And none are seen where hundreds played.
But soon, the intruding terror gone,
Slowly, slily, one by one,
Into the middle stream they row,
Back-glancing often as they go,
With sharp, retrospective eyes,
Still careful of some new surprise.

Fierce and more fierce descends the heat,
And warns me timely to retreat.
I watch the pallid moon
Follow the fiery sun
Up the hot height of noon,
And wish the day was done,
That I might wander and enjoy
Her evening shine, more cool and coy.
Some three hours since the cattle fled
Where branches screen them overhead;
And from afar or near,
However quick the ear,
No sound is heard of voice or tread:
Not even the gentle house-dove's coo
Comes the sullen silence through;
All living sounds are dumb,
Even the gnat's shrill hum.

Yes, now, the trees among,
I hear a human tongue
Through the stillness forcing,
And volubly discoursing;
And by the rattling hammer,
Striking with sudden stroke,
And long-resounding clamour;
And by the spiral smoke,
That mounts and melts in air,
Know who is quartered there.

When stifling warmth each sense o'erwhelms,
Wisely, in shadow of the elms,
Encamps the travelling tinker;
In pot or pan nice artizan,
For comeliness a proper man,
Merry as Marian in the May,
Or birds at breaking of the day,
The loudest laugher — lightest thinker!

The miller's wife, the miller's maid,
Indulge the pause in house-affairs,
And watch him, curious of his trade,
And hearken to his vagrant airs,—
Short snatches of old songs, that live,
Live only, in mean memories,
Transmitted, rude-born air and words,
As birds record the song of birds;—
But though harsh-jangling sounds the rhyme,
The tune defies the beat of time;

From singing sire to singing son
The unmeasured measures living run,
A pulse to human passions give,
Draw tender tears from sternest eyes,
Arouse the slumbering sympathies,
And hardest hearts make sensitive.

The children know his voice as well
As sound of their own Sabbath-bell,
And welcome him with shoutings when
He travels round to them again:
For he has many a prank to tell,
And childish tale and simple rhyme,
Quaint fragments of the olden time;
And while the little circle stand
With folded hands behind their backs,
Watching the wonders of his hand,
Full many a ready joke he cracks.
They never tire to see his skill,
Though still the same, 'tis novel still;
They never weary of his wit,
Though time has had the use of it.
One hands his tools, or blows his fire;
All tend him as good sons their sire;
And he encourages around,
And loves to hear their voices sound;
For he has been a sire, and fed
Five dusky boys with daily bread,
And he is old, and they are dead:

But sorrow bows him not, for still
He laughs, makes laugh, whene'er he will;
Keeps mirth like music in his mind,
Removes, and leaves old cares behind,
And new ones whistles to the wind.
And wandering on, where'er he comes,
The startling roll of martial drums
Wakes not so soon the warlike strife,
As he the peaceful rural life.

The village wit, with civil leer,
And jests upon his gipsy race,
Will pause his country news to hear,
The gossip of some distant place.
The beadle, lofty man and loud,
Though careful that his public pride
By stooping stands more dignified,
Will condescend among the crowd;
And while the shrinking urchins stare,
And awful view his purple face,
Affect the patronizing air,
Forget the glories of his lace,
Suspend the magisterial rod,
Bestow the bland, familiar nod;
And, if he asks what cattle-pond
Last washed the dingy vagabond,
What stocks he honoured, and what cage
Last lodged him in his pilgrimage,
The vagrant laughs and minds him not,
For sufferance is his chosen lot;

And time, which whitened o'er his hair,
Has steeled his careless heart to bear
The scoffs and blows which are his share;
Has taught him, when by power oppressed,
And butt for his tyrannic jest,
Or surly threatenings, to rely
Upon the general sympathy,
That sides the many with the few,
When justice would injustice do.
For well he knows there's not a squire,
Rich yeoman, or rude serving-boor,
But would resent, with generous ire,
The power that harmed him at their door.
This kindness keeps him with his kind,
Brings home the vagrant from the moor,
The roadside waste, or lurking lane,
In ill-reputed neighbourhood;
Persuades him, more than counsel could,
From his wild habits to refrain, —
The midnight prowl, the thievish gain, —
Allures him from his outlaw clan,
And socializes him in mind,
And makes him human — makes him man.

Serenely dwelling by the side
Of this small stream without a tide,
From thronging marts afar, —
Unvexed by any drearier din
Than their wheels make, or leaping linn
Waging its watery war,

Whate'er he brings from towns remote,
Of story, song, or anecdote, —
Who thrives or fails, who stands or flies;
Who lofty, fall, or, lowly, rise;
Who kindly love, or rudely jar;
Who wretched sad, or happy are;
Who careless sing, or careful weep;
Who sleep the long, unbroken sleep;
And who are born, and who are brides;
What bad is done, what good betides;
These, and a thousand things besides,
Find credence in their simple ears;
And, as he shifts from tale to tale,
From misery to mockery veers,
Their answering faces flush or pale,
Their eyes shine out, or dim with tears:
He, with a thoughtless heart, the while
Looks upward with a merry leer,
Enjoys the buxom maiden's smile,
And chuckles at her mistress' tear:
To fill the pause when topics fail,
Quaffs thirstily the nut-brown ale;
Or loudly now the valley rings
With echoes of some verse he sings,
And repetitions of the blows
Which he on pot or pan bestows.

Thus, dwelling far and dwelling lone,
This vagrant wanderer from the town,

With idle histories half his own,
Their hearts can thrill, their eyes can drown.
And rudely though he jars the chain
That links them to all human kind,
They find a pleasure in their pain,
A peace in their disturbed mind : —
Their little sorrows seem the less
When measured by a greater sorrow ;
Their hearts forget their selfishness,
And generously disdain to borrow
A single safety and relief
From the hard tax of human grief,
A sole exemption from the throes,
The groaning pangs and whelming woes,
The maddening miseries of others ;
And open widely as they can
To all the family of man,
As natural sisters — natural brothers,
Whose kindred pleasures, kindred pains,
Cares, losses, crosses, hopes and gains,
Their hates or likings, peace or strife,
Tell them, with silent voice, the while
They with them weep or with them smile ;
That though they live apart from life,
The throbbing tide that rising fills
Their bosom-founts, till trickling rills
O'errun their faces, is but part
Of the vast waters of the human heart.

The ale is finished, the labour done;
The tale is ended, the fee is won,
And merrily, like a man of mettle,
The wandering tinker starts to trudge it:
In one hand swings his smoking kettle,
From his broad shoulder swags his budget;
And louder and louder the valley rings,
For now 'tis the joyous ale that sings.
What cares he for the summer's heat,
Or the drowthy dust at his burning feet?
Onward he swaggers, right jovially,
Over the meadows and over the lea,
Leaping the ditches and leaping the stiles,
The merriest man in a hundred miles.

THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

In the world's proud eye
I care not to flaunt;
A snug nook in the vale
Is my lowly haunt.

While the tempest's flash
Scathes the mountain flowers,
All I feel of the storm
Is the wealth of its showers.

H.

Painted by J. Richter. Engraved by H. Cook.

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SEVENTEEN.

BY T. CROFTON CROKER.

Eyes she had of heavenly blue,
Cheeks like two blush roses,
Fresh as when the morning dew
On their tender tint reposes.

Lips of coral — teeth of pearl —
Curling playfully her tresses;
Though a woman, still a girl,
Yet her brow grave thought expresses.

Could the heart, like flint or steel,
Scorn mere wheedling words of lightness,
Still the hardest heart must feel
A girl's wit—electric brightness.

When I heard her — then my ear
Heard an angel's voice beguiling;
When I gazed, and would not hear,
Then I saw, an angel smiling.

A NIGHT SKETCH:

(Taken near Newgate.)

One night, whilst wandering 'round the city,
(The wild moon blinded by a cloud,)
Just 'scaping from a wealthy revel,
And being with red wine over-loud,
I let my thoughts for once run over,
And laughed at all things base and proud.

Not glad, nor sorry; yet such spirit
Stung me to bitter mirth, as when
Some penniless, reckless, wight espieth
Sin, snug 'mongst rich and pious men.
Quoth I — "I'll note each thing that passeth,
And write it down with my iron pen."

And, look!—where the street-beggar crawleth,
His wallet empty by his side,
Searching for what the dog disdaineth,
For what the almshouse-boys deride.
What use? — The rich man sings and passes,
And gains no lesson for his pride.

Upon yon step, as pale as Famine,
  Half-clad, unfed, unsheltered, worn,
Sleeps one whose voice once mocked the river,
  Whose eyes (sweet eyes!) outshone the morn:
Yet the lady and her lovely daughter
  Shoot from their chariot looks of scorn.

And, lo! unto the workhouse table
  A dead old man is borne away,
Met by a hoary churchman, counting
  The value of his tithes to-day.
He sees no grave gaping beside him —
  He sees not *he* is old and gray!
  Where falls the moral?—Gentles, say!

Awake! thou Storm that send'st thy thunders
  Into the darkness of the night!
Burst on our ears! Spout forth thy lightnings,
  And fill our insolent minds with light!
Burn on our brain Heaven's mighty lessons,
  And force us from the wrong to right!

And thou, black monster Den, beside me, —
  Within whose granite ribs there creep
The reptiles of our race, — speak *Thou*,
  In human groans and curses deep!
Laugh, felons — murderers! — No reply? —
  None! — All save the beggar sleep.

Come, then, — whom Hunger makes his fellow,
And Winter welcomes with his cold ;
Come near, old beggar ; thou shalt taste
For once, rich meat and wine that's old.
Come, — thou shalt tell me all thy story,
And I will pay thee back with gold.

" Where wast thou born? where bred?"—" The work-
house,
Yon stately pile — first gave me bread,
(A scanty morsel) when my mother
Sickened from want, and sought a bed
To die in. She lay down, poor heart!
Sobbed out a blessing, sir, — and fled!

" But soon they gave me work, and bade me
Earn what I ate ; and so I tried
To earn the coarse bad meal that fed me,
With something, sir, of childish pride :
My only pleasure being to loiter
Near the bed where my mother died.

" Then, they unto the factory sent me,
To gasp in stifling rooms, and turn
The wheel that brought a merchant money,
Under a tyrant cold and stern.
At last, — I 'scaped. (These shrivelled sinews
Tell all that you need wish to learn.)

" Since then, the beggar's lot is mine —
To weep — to starve — to crawl around
The bitter world for bread, and seek
The pity nowhere to be found!
(Still, sir, — I hope to share with others
The quiet underneath the ground.)

" I begged. I sought the statesman: he
Was busy with the public good.
I sought the almsgiver; and he gave
Much stern advice and little food.
I sought the jewelled dames; but they
My vulgar griefs ne'er understood.

" I sought — judge — general — bishop — peer,
And was, with lofty looks, denied.
I sought great men in crowds; but they
In silence cold each other eyed" —
" Peace, peace!" quoth I, " 'tis the same story —
Man's meanness answering to his pride.

" Where dwell'st thou?" — "Near this den of stone
I like to live: I scarce know why;
For oft the prisoners shriek. At times,
Indeed, I more contented lie,
Hearing of woes more deep than mine;
And then I pray for those about to die!"

" Man, thou do'st *well*. 'Tis well, 'tis wise,
Comfort from any source to glean.
Unclasp thy heart, and bid Compassion
Enter, and dwell from morn 'till e'en.
'Twill change, like suns in cold spring weather,
The barren to a bounteous scene.

" He who ' the right' doth think and do,
Need seldom in the bad world sigh.
Power hath he over his own heart,
The first spot underneath the sky.
Here's gold. Go laugh; and heed no more
How idiot Folly stalketh by.

Whether the ostrich tail be seen,
Flaunting about from side to side,
Or tinselled toy, or ribbon gawd
In blue or bloody colour dyed, —
Content thee. Learn, whate'er its name,
That Pride is still no more than Pride."

BARRY CORNWALL.

THE DOOM OF THE HOUSE OF SASSAN.

An Ancient Persian Legend.

BY W. C. TAYLOR, LL.D.

When Alexander the Great had completed the conquest of the Persian empire, and extended his sway from the shores of the Mediterranean to the banks of the Indus, he began to discover that some more permanent bond of union than physical force, was requisite to bind together nations so discordant in language, in feeling, and in every recognised principle of action. With consummate wisdom, he formed a plan for joining his remote and discordant dominions in one great commercial chain; trusting that continued intercourse, and mutual interest would ultimately blend all into a common and uniform mass. But, during the last year of his life, flattering voices whispered in his ear that the opinions of a prince should be the standard of belief for a people; that it was unwise to trust to the slow operations of time for producing an effect which might be accomplished by issuing a proclamation; and that to Hellenize the entire East, and make all Asia, in

its religious, social, and political institutions, a mere enlargement of Greece, was a revolution that depended on a mere exertion of his will. Philosophers complained to him of the gloomy metaphysics of Zerdusht and his followers; poets contrasted the airy and fanciful mythology of Greece with the wild and chilling speculations that form the basis of ancient Asiatic creeds; and historians declared that both Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes prescribed rules of faith, and made obedience to them the measure of allegiance. Alexander became a persecutor: the worship of fire was proscribed, the altars of the Magi overthrown, and the mention of Ormuzd's name prohibited; but the Iranians clung to the religion of their fathers,—they adored the One God, clothed "in clouds and thick darkness," whose mysterious existence they believed to be typified by the element of fire. They fled from cities, to rocky caves and trackless mountains: the precipitous range running nearly parallel to the Persian Gulf, from the pass called the Susian Gates to the Carmanian desert, afforded security for the practice of those mysterious rites, in which the symbols of a pure belief in a beneficent Supreme Being, were strangely mixed with notions of an evil principle, whose power almost countervailed that of the All-Merciful. Some similarity in creed, and a greater similarity in suffering, had united the Persians to the Jews, when both were subjected to the iron rule of the Babylonish sceptre. The traditions of both nations concur in declaring that Zerdusht, or Zoroaster, learned many of

the principles of the creed he formed, from the prophets and the writings of the Jews: they also aver that Daniel, in the close of his life, devoted his energies to spread the true faith among the sons of Iran; forgetting that the time had not arrived when it should cease to be the exclusive inheritance of the posterity of Abraham. Thus it has happened that the Iranians, or native Persians hated idolatry as intensely as the Jews did after their restoration, and regarded the worship of graven images with horror and contempt.

Alexander died:—his name and memory were execrated by the worshippers of fire, and this has been held sufficient proof of his sanctity by the Mahommedans of later times, to entitle him to rank in the number of their prophets. The Macedonian empire was torn to pieces by civil wars; during their progress the Iranians openly revived the practices of their ancestors, and the Seleucidæ, who finally obtained the provinces of Upper Asia, were too busily immersed in western politics, to take charge of eastern creeds. Antiochus, whom his creatures nick-named the Illustrious, and his enemies denominated the Insane, soon after his accession issued an edict of uniformity, and forbade the practice of any but Grecian rites, under the severest penalties. The Jews and Iranians were driven to take arms; the former, under the gallant Maccabees, were the earliest in the field, and their standard of independence waved in triumph over the hills of Judea; but it was long before the Persians, broken and divided, emulated the heroic example; and their first leader

was found not among the great or noble, but in the humble shed of a blacksmith.

There is a wild and unfrequented mountain pass, south east of the Susian gates, where a branch from the chain of Mount Nebros extends nearly to the Persian Gulf, and hems in a district, whose inhabitants have always boasted of the purity of their descent, and their adherence to ancient custom. A deep ravine, with walls of rock on each side, opens a passage into a sloping valley, widening as it ascends, until it terminates abruptly in a conical peak, round the base of which the road is continued by the edge of yawning chasms, and frightful precipices for many a weary mile. The middle of the valley is occupied by a small village, if such a name can be given to a collection of miserable huts; the road beyond is carried through the heart of the mountains, offering to the traveller but one favourable spot for rest or encampment, in a rugged recess, whose basin-like shape suggests it to have been the crater of an extinct volcano.

About the middle of the reign of Antiochus, three travellers were seen entering the romantic gorge that led to this secluded spot. The eldest wore the prohibited dress of a Mobed, or Persian priest; the sacred fillet was on his head, the mysterious cincture round his loins, and the burning censer, whose flame it was impious to extinguish, was in his hands. Next to him came a warrior, clothed in light mail, richly ornamented with gold and silver, seemingly more intended

for display in a court, than use in the field; but there was sometimes a fire in the eye, and firmness in the compressed lip, which showed that the Persian noble, for such the jewel in his helmet proved him to be, would not shrink in the hour of mortal strife, though he possessed not the energy required for continued exertion. The third of the travellers belonged to the class of runners, or couriers, whose journeys, so wondrous for their length and speed, have been the theme of admiration since Persia first had a name in history. A peculiar expression of the eye, and marked cheek-bones, showed that he was not purely of Iranian descent, but, by one parent at least, connected with the posterity of Jacob.

"And it is thus," said the Mobed, half to himself, and half to the noble soldier, "it is thus that Sassan, the representative of the Kaianian house,—the last descendant of the illustrious Cyrus,—visits the cradle of his religion and his race, stealing through these rugged paths like a hunted thief, not daring to display the cognizance of his family or his faith, until human habitations are left a day's journey behind. And I, a Mobed of Mobeds, in whose veins the blood of Zerdusht runs, who have held converse with the superior intelligences, and dived into the secrets of futurity,—I am forced to hide myself from the barbarians of the west, the sons of a land on whom our bright father, the sun, looks coldly and disdainfully. How long?—O Ormuzd, how long shall the hearts of thy chosen be chill, and their hands weak?"

"Father!" said Sassan, "Cyrus raised not a hand against the tyranny of Afrasiab, until the appointed hour was shown by the finger of destiny. Safe in yonder valley I have determined to bide my time until the same sign shall warn me that the doom of Irán is accomplished. Rarely do the sons of the spoiler visit the secluded spot, and none of them could dream to find the prince of Susa in the guise of an assistant to Gavah, the blacksmith. I have come on the first of every moon to worship in the ruined temple where the sign was given to Cyrus; I have prayed and wept by its desolate altar, but there has been no answering signal, no responding flame—all was silent, and all was gloom."

"I fear that even these visits will soon be dangerous," said the courier; "for as I returned from the land of my maternal ancestors, after the Syrian forces had driven the Jews to their mountains, I learned that Phidippides, the new governor of Susa, had discovered the secret connection between the insurgents of Judea, and the discontented Iranians: there are traitors among both nations; there is, perhaps, a traitor even in yonder valley, for I heard that a clue had been discovered to the concealment of the illustrious Sassan."

"Twice have you declared your suspicion of treason," said Sassan, impatiently, "but you can give me no proof, except vague rumours of your own footsteps having been tracked; and this is far more likely to have occurred from some of your own imprudences, than from the treason of any who boasts the blood of Irán."

"My lord has won the love of Vashti, the blacksmith's daughter," said Sirach; "Kobad was once her favoured lover. The shepherd is revengeful: is it not a proverb that the ring-dove entered into alliance with the kite, and betrayed the secret entrance into the dove-cote, when a rival deprived him of his mate?"

"Silence, and onward!" exclaimed the Mobed, "we must reach the temple before the sun attains its zenith, that we may demand the counsel of Ormuzd, when his visible representative, the sun, is at the summit of his glory!"

They proceeded at smart pace through the ravine, and entered the circular valley, or basin; the aspect was singularly gloomy. The soil was covered with a coarse grass, interspersed with stunted brushwood; there was not a single tree on the surrounding hills, which seemed composed of the fragments of the rocks hurled by the Titans in their war against the gods, so loosely and irregularly were they piled; the few dwarf bushes that grew up between their interstices, seemed to have been planted with the express purpose of caricaturing vegetation—so sere and withered was their appearance, even in the genial season of spring. The travellers advanced to a massive ruin in the centre of the valley; its destruction had manifestly tasked the spoilers: to shatter that lofty cupola,—to remove those ponderous beams that formed the roof, and to displace the immense monolith that served as an altar, must have been a work of no ordinary toil; but fame had told the Grecian conquerors that the treasures of the

ancient Persian kings were stored in this sanctuary, and a treacherous eunuch had led them to the spot. They searched floor, roof, and walls, but had only their labour for their pains, and they vented their rage by destroying every part of the building which would yield to force or fire.

The travellers entered the scene of devastation with very different sensations; the Mobed was sunk in sorrow; Sassan burned with indignation; Sirach, who had just returned from a land where war had worked its most fearful ravages, viewed the ruin with indifference. Light streamed through the shattered roof even of an inner sanctuary, which seemed to have been originally closed against every ray, save what came through a narrow aperture facing due south, and which, consequently, scarcely admitted any illumination, save at the moment when the sun was passing the meridian. Under the direction of the Mobed, Sassan and Sirach covered the fractures of the inner roof, as well as they could, with grass and brush-wood; and then, hurrying through the ceremonies of purification, entered the sanctuary to await the hour of noon. The silence that reigned in the lonely place continued for some time unbroken; the light, imperfectly excluded, showed Sassan leaning on his spear, casting impatient glances at the roof which he had not been able completely to close; Sirach listlessly reclining against the wall, and the Mobed standing opposite the southern orifice of the arched roof, his lips moving as if in earnest supplication, while no sound issued from them.

At the instant of noon a bright ray shot through the aperture, the Mobed called out, "The intelligences have spoken, hear their words, and obey:—

"Though 'tis silent all, and dark,
Under ashes glows the spark,
Hiding close the germ of flame—
Winds can't quell, nor waters tame.
In the sacred earth below
Unseen fires this moment glow:
Streams of liquid living light,
Ever flowing, ever bright,
Issuing forth from Ormuzd's throne,
To his followers only known,
Strike the last stone that the sun,
As he passes, shines upon.
Hassan, strike! and strike at once,
Flame is Ormuzd's dread response."

The Mobed had not finished his oracular recitation, when Sassan plunged his spear, as directed, into what seemed to be a stone, but was in reality a bituminous incrustation; a jet of burning naphtha followed the blow, whose pure white flame seemed scarcely to lose its brilliancy, though it had to struggle with the light of day. Before this portentous jet all three bowed in reverence, while the Mobed recited the well-known fargard of the Zendavesta, which predicts the final triumph of the spirits of light over the powers of darkness.

"I hail and accept the omen, son of Zerdusht," said Sassan; "but question once more the intelligences, and demand by what sign shall we know the favourable hour for displaying the banner of Irán?"

The Mobed muttered a brief prayer, and then, in a hurried voice, replied with a rapidity that almost rendered him unintelligible :—

"No omen from earth, and no portent on high,
No voice in the winds, and no sign in the sky,
Shall herald the moment when Ormuzd's decree
Bids the desolate Irán arise, and be free.
It comes like a sun-burst in tempest's commotion,
That gilds the rough waves of the high-swelling ocean:
Like the avalanche falling from Zagros's mountain;
Like the springing from earth of yon fiery fountain.
It is come. Already the sabres are flashing;
Deep wounds the proud breasts of oppressors are gashing:
A banner is lifted, a trumpet is blown,
Hope fans every fold, and joy swells every tone.
Away, prince, away, from these desolate halls;
Tis glory that asks, 'tis thy country that calls—
Head the hosts round the standard of freedom that rally,
And wait for thy coming below in yon valley.
But change not the flag thou wilt find there display'd;
To that, and that only, lends Ormuzd his aid:
Preserve it, for ever, the symbol and sign
Of Irán's dominion to thee and to thine."

While the Mobed spoke, the fiery stream gradually abated, and, soon after he had concluded it, sunk into the ground. This natural phenomenon, the spontaneous combustion of naphtha-springs, has been frequently described by modern travellers in Persia; yet few, however well prepared, can witness it, for the first time, without feelings of admiration and awe. It is, therefore, not surprising that Sassan received the appearance as a sign from heaven, confirming his own hopes, and the predictions of the Mobed.

While the travellers were absent from the valley, the treason of which Sirach had spoken became manifest. A squadron of Greek cavalry, headed by Phidippides, an Athenian soldier of fortune, recently raised to the government of Susa, and guided by the jealous Kobad, penetrated the mountain passes, and surrounded the shed of Gavah the blacksmith. They failed to discover the Prince of Susa; but the beautiful Vashti was a more tempting prize to the gallant Phidippides, and he tore her, in spite of her shrieks, from her father's arms. Kobad remonstrated, and claimed the maid as the stipulated reward of his treachery.

"Wretch!" said Phidippides, striking him no gentle blow with his extended lance, "these charms suit not a miscreant like thee. We profit by treason, but we detest the traitor. Away! thy presence is displeasing. Come not near me, unless thou bringest the head of the proscribed Sassan."

"Noble Greek!" said Gaváh, "my daughter is an

Iránian of pure descent; she may not wed the son of the foreigner."

"Wed!" exclaimed Phidippides, with an insulting laugh, "think you that an Athenian would dream of wedding a barbarian. No, thy daughter is my slave; but her beauty will purchase an amelioration of her lot. You and your sons must also follow me to Susa, and answer before the satrap's tribunal for harbouring a fugitive rebel!"

Gaváh wept, prayed, and tore his hair; the villagers joined in his supplications; but Phidippides mocked their sorrow, and commanded his men to secure their prisoners. Vashti was mounted on a steed, and placed in the centre of the squadron; her younger brother was bound on another horse by her side; when Phidippides, alarmed by some demonstrations of resistance in the crowd, moved the greater part of his squadron towards the entrance of the valley, in order to secure his retreat. Kobad was necessary to him as a guide, and, forgetting that he had so recently provoked his vengeance by a blow, he commanded his attendance, and the traitor, dreading the vengeance of his countrymen, readily complied.

A small detachment remained to secure Gaváh and his eldest son. A Thracian approached to bind the hardy blacksmith; but, as he drew near, Gaváh suddenly seized his sledge, and at one blow laid him dead at his feet. Ere the Greeks could recover from their surprise, the villagers pressed upon them so fiercely and so densely, that they could not use their weapons.

They were forced down the valley with loss; and had not Phidippides halted and formed his men, to rescue the fugitives, the whole detachment would have been torn to pieces.

Taking off his leathern apron, Gaváh raised it on a pole, and shouted aloud, "For Irán and vengeance!" Wondrous was the effect of this singular banner. The villagers were suddenly animated with the heroism of veterans; they seized their rural implements, formed themselves into a dense mass, and bore down on the Grecian squadron. Phidippides did not wait for their nearer approach; he had learned duly to estimate the first violence of a popular movement, and he trusted to have easy revenge when the heat of the sudden impulse passed away, and when he would be supported by the troops that had remained outside the defile.

The villagers gained little advantage in the fray; but they had, for the first time, seen Grecian soldiers in the act of retreating, and this filled their hearts with all the excitement of victory. Signal fires were kindled on the tops of the neighbouring hills; the blacksmith's apron was planted as a standard in the centre of the valley; and when Sassan with his companions returned, at the close of night, from their pilgrimage, they found that the war of independence had begun.

It was well for the Iránian cause, that previous arrangements had been made for an insurrection; the outbreak was precipitated by Gaváh's act of unpremeditated vengeance. "It was," in the words of an eastern poet, "the torch applied to a pile, where the

faggots of injury had been heaped, the oil of insult poured, and where withered joys supplied grass for the kindling." But still the revolt had been so far matured, that the beacons, which were kindled on the hills, collected numerous reinforcements for the patriots, and supplied them with strength to meet the combat of the ensuing day.

Sassan was unanimously hailed their chief and sovereign; but he manifested so much of the weakness and indecision which distinguished the court of the last Darius, that the insurgents, with the popular instinct which seems ever to characterise a mob in moments of difficulty and danger, while they nominally tendered their allegiance to the prince, turned to Gaváh for advice and direction. Neither did Sassan envy the preference shown to the blacksmith; on the contrary, he requested Gaváh, as he was well acquainted with the localities, to make the necessary arrangements for resisting the Greeks, whose return, with additional forces, manifestly could not be far distant. Sirach, who had witnessed the early struggles of the Maccabees in the mountains of Judea, was of great assistance to the Iránians; the dispositions for defence were made by him and Gaváh, while Sassan inspected the arms and array of the few who could be regarded as regular soldiers. Both sides of the defile that led into the valley were occupied by those for whom no weapons could be procured; loosened rocks and massy stones, however, were around them in abundance, which, at a given signal, they would roll

into the pass beneath. The main body of the villagers, armed with pikes and pointed stakes, formed a close phalanx round the apron-banner, a little above the spot where the defile by a sharp ascent opened into the valley. Gaváh took the command of this main body. Sirach led a small troop of archers farther in advance to act as scouts, and, on the approach of the enemy, to occupy the rocks on their flanks, and gall their rear. To Sassan was entrusted the small troop of regular and perfectly armed warriors, who took a position on the right of the main body, to act according to circumstances. At some distance behind the lines the Mobed had erected an altar of turf, on which the sacred fire, kindled from his censer, was blazing; while women and children, standing around, sang one of the long-prohibited hymns to Ormuzd.

" Ormuzd! Lord of earth and air!
Pure effulgence! Self-create;
Hear, O hear, thy children's prayer,
Look on Irán's wretched state.

" Thou alone art king of might,
Thou alone hast boundless power;
Help us in the coming fight;
Aid us in the trying hour.

" Once for thee, throughout this land,
Altars blazed and victims bled;
But the stranger's withering hand
Hath the bolts of ruin sped.

" Now, through Irán's hills and plains,
None may speak thy holy name:
Silent are thy shattered fanes;
Quenched thine altar's sacred flame.

" We, the meanest, and the last,
Who before thy footstool bow,
With chilling fear, and eager haste,
Falter forth our trembling vow.

" Lo! we hear the foes advancing,
Trumpet's clang and armour's clash,
Warriors' shout, and chargers prancing,
As o'er yonder rocks they dash.

" Mighty Ormuzd! bid thy stars
In their courses tyrants smite;
Break their fetters, burst their bars,
Re-establish Irán's might.

" Then for thee once more shall blaze
All the long-extinguished pyres;
And again Iránians raise
Hymns to thee who loved our sires.

" Wilt thou not that love extend
Unto us their . . . . "

The rest of the verse was lost in "a quaver of consternation," for the sounds of hot pursuit came up

the defile and the signals of the scouts announced the approach of a foe. Three fugitives were soon seen holding the race, for life and death, before squadrons of Grecian horse, whose order and discipline were lost in their eagerness to overtake their prey. One of the run-aways only had a fair chance of escape,—a veil floating to the winds showed that this was Vashti; behind came her brother and the repentant Kobad, but the Greeks gained fast on their flagging steeds, and death was scarcely three spears length behind them. In the excitement of the moment, the Iránians could scarcely be got to keep their lines; Gaváh, however, though his stake in the race was deepest, compelled them to remain in their ranks, but he could not prevent the vain cries by which they tried to cheer the flying to one final exertion. What is brief in action is frequently long in narration; the eye had scarcely time to wink when Vashti having reached the close of the defile, turned her horse's head right up the steep; the gallant animal sprung forward with the lightness and fleetness of the gazelle, and, in an instant, she passed into the files of her countrymen, which closed behind her and hid her from the sight of her pursuers. Her companions were less successful; within a bow shot of safety, the steed that bore Vashti's brother, stumbled and fell; and ere the hapless boy could make an effort to disengage himself, he was pinned to the earth by a Grecian lance. It was impossible to prevent the archers of the advance from taking instant vengeance by a shower of darts; but their fury was fatal to the success

of their aim; their only victim being Kobad, who had abandoned his steed, and was attempting to ascend the rocks at the side of the pass. An arrow entered his throat, the gurgling blood choked his voice, but he rallied the last energies of life to bequeath his repentance to those he had injured. "Fight!" he cried, "for Irán and vengeance!" and fell lifeless into the pass.

Phidippides, seeing no enemy before him but the feeble vanguard, dashed onwards with his troops; the archers speeding to their appointed posts on the rocks, retired before him, and he found himself unexpectedly in front of the serried phalanx of pike-men. The pursuers almost threw their coursers on their haunches as they pulled up before this sudden obstacle; it needs not to tell that they had to fight at a fearful disadvantage; the horses were blown and the riders jaded by the recent pursuit; they saw archers manning the rocks at each side of the pass from which they had emerged, thus rendering retreat hazardous, and they could scarcely hope that their feeble charge could break the close lines of the Iránians. Phidippides had all the pride and courage of a Greek; he hastily formed his troops, and giving for the signal word the glorious name of "Marathon," charged the phalanx. Notwithstanding their weariness, the Greeks evinced their wonted superiority over Asiatics; they forced an opening into the hostile lines, and, but for the exhausted state of steeds and riders, might have cut their way through; but Gaváh once more rallied his countrymen, and Sassan at the same moment attacked the Greeks

in flank. Vashti herself grasped the standard, and as she waved the blacksmith's apron, raised the cry "For Irán and vengeance!" The struggle soon terminated; the Greeks were forced back into the defile, and driven headlong down the steep, while arrows, stones, and displaced rocks fell on them, in deadly shower, from the archers and peasants on the surrounding heights. Phidippides was the last in flight; an arrow entering his cheek had inflicted a ghastly wound,—a block of stone hurled from the cliff had crushed his thigh,—but he still tried to make an imposing retreat, and to check the pursuers, who were now rushing forward to complete their victory. His efforts were vain; no man heeded his commands; the few survivors had but one hope,—to escape from the defile,—and, in their haste, riding against each other, they stumbled and fell over the rugged and broken ground. He who fell never rose again. The Iránians showed no mercy; if any arm stayed the blow, some neighbour called out, "Remember the son of Gaváh," and the uplifted weapon found a bloody sheath. Vashti and the black banner were foremost in the pursuit; her eye was fixed upon Phidippides alone, and she saw with delight his steed stumble more frequently, while the sinking rider became less and less able to manage the reins. Not more than ten or twelve of the Greek emerged from the defile; among these Phidippides was not; he had been mocked by the hope of safety; just as he caught a glimpse of the open country beyond the pass, he was felled by a blow from the pole on

which the leather apron was suspended, and tumbled helpless at the feet of Vashti. The last words that sounded in his ears were "Iran and vengeance!" as a woman's dagger pierced his heart.

The heat of the combat over, the excitement that had borne Vashti forward through scenes so rarely witnessed by woman, especially in Asia, sunk at once, and she fell exhausted on the earth. The Mobed hasted to raise her. "Hail!" he said, "chosen standard-bearer of Ormuzd, heaven-elected Queen of Irán! Arise, and fulfil thy glorious destiny; to thee and to thee only it is given to place the illustrious Sassan on the throne of his ancestors, and share the splendours of his reign!"

Enthusiasm is most powerful and most dangerous in the moments of physical and mental weakness. The words of the Mobed were a spell upon Vashti's soul that predestined the future course of her life, and bound her to a brief, brilliant career, until the fires kindled in her brain and heart were consumed by their own intensity, and sunk at once into gloom and madness. The object of the wily priest was obvious; he knew Sassan's weakness, and wished to have him supported and guided by Gaváh in the approaching struggle; he was aware of the prince's inclinations, and he insured their gratification by opposing the decrees of Ormuzd, to the prejudices which the Persians entertained against unequal marriages; he calculated on the effects of superstition over the minds of the simple mountaineers to whom the appearance of a

woman in the field of battle seemed a prodigy without parallel; and the first results more than answered his expectation.

Reason was already shaken on her throne by the Mobed's address, and Vashti's account of her escape from the Grecian camp was scarcely intelligible; she remembered a mass of things, but nothing distinctly. Phidippides had conveyed her to his tent, offended her ears with licentious proposals, and menaced violence; a royal messenger interrupted him with intelligence that Antiochus had come in person to Susa; that the Jews had routed the Syrian armies, that the Turanians had crossed the Oxus, and that both were in secret communication with Sassan. The monarch therefore ordered his deputy to take his entire division of cavalry into the mountains, to block up every avenue, to search every recess, to spare neither pains nor bribes to get possession of the prince of Susa, dead or alive. Then came a blank in memory; she was borne from her couch, when or how she knew not, and placed on horseback between her brother and Kobad; there was a faint remembrance of a short struggle and a quick flight, the expiring cry of a brother, a voice shouting vengeance in her ear, and a bloody hand pointing out Phidippides as its object. Of the fight in which she had borne so conspicuous a part, she knew nothing, but she knew that the hand which guided her revenge had finally directed her dagger to the ravisher's heart.

The talents that Gaváh displayed in the crisis, jus-

tified the Mobed's sagacity. While Sassan employed himself in forming a showy body of guards, the blacksmith sent messengers through the south of Persia to rouse the inhabitants, and Sirach undertook a hazardous journey into Judea, to form an alliance with the Maccabees. Neither was the Mobed idle; he knew that the personal bravery of the prince of Susa was frequently rendered unavailing by indecision, indolence, and love of ease; he feared the oriental taste for splendidly dressed, rather than usefully armed soldiers, which had long been the bane of the Persian monarchs; and he pointed to the homely banner of the apron as a proof that Ormuzd's favour would be shown to iron and labour, not to gold and luxury. Vashti seconded these lessons; she successfully stimulated Sassan to fresh exertions, and the fame he won by following her advice made him long submit to her influence. But Vashti's sway over Sassan's mind loosened her hold upon his heart; even gratitude will not always reconcile a man to the discovery of a monitress in his mistress; the unconscious wounds of self-love are beyond cure; they rankle and fester unobserved, until the disease has poisoned every source of thought and action.

Antiochus was enraged when he heard, at the same moment, of the ruin of his cavalry, and the general revolt of southern Persia. He marched against the insurgents with a large force of Syrians and Asiatic Greeks; the Irânians as eagerly hasted to the combat. Even at this crisis Sassan could not conceal his princely dislike of the mean habiliments and plain

weapons of the peasantry that constituted the chief part of his army; he entrusted the command of his main force to Gaváh, and reserved to himself the guidance of his brilliant guards, who were mostly young men mounted on handsome chargers. Vashti, with a less showy body of cavalry, kept guard on the sacred standard, and, beside her, the Mobed was offering a sacrifice for the safety of Irán. The morning was over-cast, and some light showers relaxed their bow-strings on both sides: the monarchs gave simultaneously the signal to engage, and Sassan's glittering squadrons were soon hand to hand with the formidable chivalry of Smyrna and Colophon. Grecian superiority was soon apparent; Vashti saw her husband's gaudy followers first waver, then break, and finally turn to flight. Seizing the banner, she waved it on high, and shouted loudly to the rescue; while the Mobed as loudly invoked Ormuzd to give his children a sign of his favour. At the instant a beam of light, struggling through the clouds, illumined the banner and its lovely bearer; less decisive evidence would have sufficed to establish a miracle in a moment of such high excitement; the charge of the Iránians, who believed themselves favoured by heaven, was irresistible; the Grecian cavalry, surprised and borne back in the very moment of assured victory, recoiled in disorder on the ranks of their own infantry, and Gaváh, at the same time, leading forward the Persians in close file, bore down all opposition. Antiochus made no effort to retrieve the fortunes of the day; he abandoned the field

before the route was complete, and never thought himself in safety until he was beyond the Tigris. In one brief hour the Seleucidæ had irretrievably lost the empire of Upper Asia.

Susa opened its gates to the conquerors; the same day witnessed the coronation of Sassan and his marriage with Vashti. The baser qualities of the prince's character were rapidly developed in prosperity. His heroic queen urged him to follow up his advantages and secure the northern provinces from the Turanians. Sirach, who had returned from Judea, seconded her recommendations, and showed that an alliance with the Maccabees would hold the Syrians in check. Sassan disregarded remonstrances and advice; he neglected his queen for the purchased charms of hirelings, and he dismissed the faithful Sirach from his service. Gaváh, however, remained at the head of the Iránian armies, and long restrained the progress of the Turanians or Parthians. He and his son finally fell in the arms of victory, and the Parthians, speedily recovering from their loss, covered Irán with their hosts of light cavalry. Sassan negociated for safety with the invaders; he agreed to abandon Susa for a pension, a qualified independence in his mountain-retreat, and a free exercise of religion for his subjects. Vashti wept, prayed, and prophesied, when she heard of this disgraceful treaty; it was all in vain. She returned with her husband to the mountains, bearing, at her own request, the banner that had been the guide to independence and freedom. When she reached the spot

where the Mobed had predicted her glorious career, she stopped the party and planted the standard. The glance that she cast around, as recollections and fancies crowded on her mind, was wild and flitting; it was the union of enthusiasm and despair; high anticipations brought to an unexpected and disastrous issue. Such a revulsion of feeling in a mind that had been long kept on the very extreme of intense excitement was more than nature could bear; insanity dictated the ravings which her auditors mistook for inspired revelations. Her eyes were first fixed on the infant son she had borne to Sassan:—"Boy!" she exclaimed, "thou art come as the lion's cub to thy rocky den, but thou shalt yet roam abroad the unconquered lord of the plains. The banner beloved of Ormuzd is borne back; the sable flag, whose darkness was light, no longer illumines the path to glory and to freedom, yet shall it stream above the heads of a nobler generation, and guide a worthy posterity to happiness and renown. We have sinned! we have sinned! Ormuzd hides his face from us, and Ahriman glares with demoniac joy on the race that shrunk from duty when success was sure and reward certain. I see the Evil Power barring the path through which we have passed; I behold his lurid aspect as he turns to Ormuzd with malignant triumph, and exults over the degeneracy of Irán. Ay, crouch and be dismayed, ye who bear the forms of men and the hearts of timid deer; a woman shows a more courageous soul. Ahriman! dread spirit of ill! I spit at thee and defy thee! Nay, shake not thy flaky hair,—

bare not thine arm from the mantle of clouds that enwraps thee and aim not thy fiery darts,—the banner of Ormuzd is spear and shield,—back, I say, back,—let the light of our great Father come to me once more. Farewell! sons of Irán, farewell; the chosen of Ormuzd leaves those who have abandoned themselves. Bear this banner to the shrine of Cyrus,—I will claim it on my return; Ahriman dares me to my last combat—I go to meet at once victory and death!" As she concluded, she spurred her steed back towards the entrance of the defile; but she had not gone many paces, when she reeled in her saddle and fell senseless to the earth.

The Mobed was the first who came to her assistance; a blood-vessel had burst, and sanguine streams issued from her nose, mouth, and ears. Recovering from their dismay the Iránians crowded round; she motioned them back, and with fearful energy shouted, "He flies! Ahriman flies, and Irán shall yet"——The effort was too great, a fresh gush of blood choked her accents, but the fire of triumph kindled for a moment in her glazing eyes like the last flash of a burning pile;—it faded, and they closed for ever.

The Mobed directed that the body should be borne to the distant sanctuary of Cyrus by a chosen band; and Sassan, roused to a better sense of his degradation, dismounted from his steed, loosed the folds of his tiara, tore his princely robes, and cast dust upon his head. The Iránians were more astonished than grieved; there is a feeling of acquiescence among the oriental

nations that has ever been the bane of their prosperity; they trusted to the future for the redemption of their national honour, and were quite contented with present disgrace, because it made no demand upon their exertions. The valley of Gavâh was reached, and here the followers of the prince of Susa encamped; while he, with the Mobed, and a train of mourners, proceeded through the mountains to the distant temple. Most of the injuries had been repaired; the altar was restored to its place, the roof of the sanctuary was closed, and the sacred fire was burning.

It was almost evening when they reached the secluded valley. Under the direction of the Mobed, Vashti's grave was dug on the spot last gilded by the rays of the setting sun, and the body was placed in its kindred earth, before the beams of parting day had ceased to illumine the mountain-tops.

Ere the ceremonies were concluded, the Mobed called Sassan away, "Son of the Kaianian race," he said, "the Superior Intelligences are angry; we must purchase their response at to-morrow's noon by a night of penance and purifications. Enter with me into the temple; no other eyes must see the fearful ceremonies by which we must avert the righteous anger of Ormuzd."

Sassan obeyed; they entered the temple, and orders were given that none of the train should presume to cross its threshold. During the entire night the attendants heard shrieks of pain and groans of agony issue from the forbidden precincts; but when morning

dawned, these were changed into hymns of joy, and they gladly joined in the songs that hailed the advent of the King of Light. They were summoned to share in the morning sacrifice; after which Sassan and the Mobed went into the inner sanctuary to await the mystic hour of noon in solitude and silence. There was little need to enjoin the train not to speak; every one knew that the oracle about to be pronounced would decide the future fate of Irán, and every voice was hushed in intense anxiety; the hours of morning wore heavily away; it seemed as if the orb of day shared the displeasure of Ormuzd, and delayed to show the brightness of his glory to the degenerate sons of Irán. At length the meridian-hour arrived, the expected beam flashed through the aperture, the spear was struck where the last gleam shone, and the jet of Naphtha sprung up in a burning stream. The Mobed, as if inspired by the presence of his god, then spoke the oracle:—

False to thy duty and thy trust,
The slave of indolence and lust,
In glory's bright and mid career
Thy nerveless arm has dropped the spear;
Lower'd the mystic flag of Fate,
Abandon'd Irán's hapless state:—
Sassan, to thee no more 'tis given
To fill the high behests of Heaven.
But Ormuzd, in another age,
Shall once again his foes engage,

And bid his banner's folds be spread
Above his chosen hero's head.
Of Vashti's line the hero springs,
The father and the king of kings;
O'er him the constant and the brave
Shall Gaváh's apron proudly wave,
And in unnumber'd battles shine,
Of victory the pledge and sign.
Till then from mortal vision veiled,
Here must the banner lie concealed
Until the fated hour is come,
Decreed by Ormuzd's changeless doom.

Centuries passed away; Rome and Parthia rose into power, they battled fiercely for the empire of Asia, while the name of Irán, and the doom of the house of Sassan, were only preserved by tradition in the remote mountains. At length Ardeshír Babegan performed a pilgrimage to the sanctuary of his race, at a time when his soul was vexed by the insults of the haughty Parthians. He slept on the floor of the temple; a vision appeared to him during the night: he saw his ancestor Sassan surrounded by the torturing flames in which the sinful worshippers of fire must be purified before they can be admitted to the beatific presence of Ormuzd.

"Most illustrious of my race," said the sufferer, "deliver me from these torments, thou alone hast the power."

"How, oh how can I give aid?" exclaimed the astonished Ardeshir. . . .

"By liberating Irán," said a silver voice behind. He turned and beheld an angelic form issuing from the sanctuary, which, with the instinct that belongs to dreams, he knew to be Vashti's. "The fated hour is come; take the banner," she continued, and placed in his hand the staff to which the blacksmith's apron was hung. As he grasped it, the vision vanished; he woke and found that he really held the mystic standard. It waved victorious in a thousand fields: the Parthian dragon, the eagles of imperial Rome, and no less imperial Byzantium sunk before it. Irán was once more a nation, and the descendants of Sassan filled the throne of Cyrus. During four hundred years Gaváh's banner was never displayed without ensuring victory to the worshippers of fire. At length the Saracens came; the glory of Irán was cloven down on the fatal field of Kadesia; and the standard became the prey of the sons of the desert, "when," says Major Price, "from the original shape and dimensions of a blacksmith's apron, it had been enlarged to the length of two-and-twenty feet, by about fifteen in breadth, enriched with jewels of inestimable value."

MY LADY'S PAGE.

MY LADY'S PAGE.

BY W. H. HARRISON.

"Now she hath favoured, doth favour, and will favour this jack-an-ape; — for what good part about him I know not, save that as one noble lady will love a messan dog, and another a screaming popinjay, and a third a Barbary ape, so doth it please our noble dame to set her affections upon this stray elf of a page."—*The Abbot.*

I SIGH not for riches nor high degree;
The life of a page is the life for me:
I sit in the hall when the tempests lower;
And in sunshine my place is my lady's bower.
Not a long-prisoned bird, just escaped from his cage,
Is so buoyant and blithe as my lady's page.

While lovers, in legions, essay to beguile
My lady's lip of a rosy smile,
I laugh in my sleeve, as I hear them sigh,
For I bask, all the day, in the light of her eye;
And, when no sunny glances their anguish assuage,
They all envy the lot of my lady's page.

At their idol's shrine let them bend the knee;
Little fairy-foot Mabel is dearer to me.
No high dame of them all treads a measure so well;
And her lips—O such lips!—but 'tis treason to tell—
They would win from his desert the anchorite sage,
Who's of much sterner stuff than my lady's page.

When the banquet is spread, and they feast it high,
And wit kindles quick beneath beauty's eye,
I pour out the red wine, and am not such an elf,
That I can't, when I please, fill a glass for myself,
Of the sunniest vintage and ripest age:—
O, a right merry life has my lady's page!

Do I envy the baron so wealthy, whose smile
Hides the care that gnaws deep at his heart the while?
Or the damsel beside him, whose hand he hath sold,
To one her heart spurneth, for sordid gold,
Thus unholily linking fair youth with age?
O she'd gladly change lots with my lady's page!

The abbot, though mitred he sit at the board,
Must brook the light jest from the belted lord;
And my lord, though his blade in the scabbard may burn,
Must endure the keen gibe of the churchman in turn.
I think, as I smile on their impotent rage,
I had rather, by far, be my lady's page.

Our seneschal grim, with a spiteful look,
Once called me "a page out of Satan's book;"
Quoth I, "May your saying be true to the letter,
For the sooner one's out of his books the better."
They may jeer me who please, but they'll get, I'll engage,
Quite as good as they bring from my lady's page.

They say — but too truly — youth's summer is short;
That its butterfly season of frolic and sport
Must give place to the cares and the struggles of men:
But why grieve for it now? 'Twill be time enough then,
When, whate'er be my part on the world's wide stage,
I shall miss the light heart of my lady's page.

TRUISMS.

What is Beauty? a frail flower:
What is Fame? an empty breath:
What the longest life? an hour,
That hath but one thing certain — Death.

H.

THE PLACE OF THE PIOUS.

A Legend of Mount Etna.

BY J. A. ST. JOHN.

Διὰ ταῦτα οἱ Σικελιῶται τόν τε χῶρον ἐκεῖνον Εὐσεβῶν Χώραν ἐκάλεσαν.
CONON *ap. Phot. Biblioth,* No. 186.

"Wherefore the Sicilians denominated that spot, the Place of the Pious."

DURING my last visit to Constance Malaspina, on my return from the East, our conversation often turned on those legends of Mount Etna, in collecting which she has, for many years, amused herself; not, perhaps, without a design of some day submitting them to the world. At first, no doubt, her sole object was to seek, in employment, oblivion of sorrows which it boots not now to dwell upon; but as the work grew beneath her hands, so increased her fondness for it. It was to her what the babe is to its mother—a refuge from painful thoughts,—an object on which to concentrate all those deep feelings that cluster round the offshoots

of our being physical or intellectual; a mirror, in some sort, in which she could behold the reflection of all her mind's beauties, as the mother beholds that of her outward graces in the unfolding lineaments of her child. To the reader, however, who has not visited Castro Janni, and become acquainted with Constance, it would be difficult to convey any idea of the mingled influences which, in her case, constituted literary inspiration. The principal element was an intimate perception of the beautiful; and to this were joined a heart brimming full of passion, acutest feelings, wounded, but only therefore rendered the more acute, and an unbounded sympathy with whatever is generous, disinterested, sublime in human nature.

The narrative immediately ensuing may be regarded as at once an example of the legends themselves, and of the way in which they were picked up. Born amid the roughnesses of its far-spread roots, Constance loved the wild scenery of the Monte Gibello. She had loved it even in her unclouded youth; but, when passion had swept, like a hurricane, over her mind, broken and borne away all the fresh buds of hope, and left the whole prospect desolate and wrapped in gloom, she experienced a double gratification in, ever and anon, roaming among the antique lavas, cinders, and encircling forests which form the outposts of that region of death. To me also those savage landscapes were pleasing—and yet all is not savage. On the contrary every traveller, whom Sicily has lured to its shores, must have felt the spell of those sirens that lurk

about the base of Etna, and wreathe the brow of earthquakes and subterraneous thunders with smiles, which inspire a deceitful confidence, and say to man, "peace, peace, when there is no peace!"

Still we both, as I said, loved the land—she for its own sake, and I chiefly for hers. But there is, near Catana, one spot, which, independently of mental associations, must ever take a strong hold on the imagination of all who view it. No oäsis in the deserts from which I came, had appeared to me so beautiful. In fact, nothing more soft, more luxuriant, more picturesque, can possibly be conceived. With great propriety it may be denominated an island, since, though no water is near, lava streams, once liquid, surround it, which, though many of them rolled down from the mountain above two thousand years ago, are still barren as the ocean. In the midst of these rugged dusky masses, ringing like metallic plates beneath the foot, stands the spot I have mentioned; a bosom-shaped hill, with a deep hollow, formerly a volcanic crater, at the summit, and clothed on all sides with vines, clumps of broad-shaded trees, and odoriferous shrubs skirting round small patches of fresh green turf, sprinkled with cowslips, buttercups, and other field flowers. About mid-hill, on a southern exposure, is a cottage in a vineyard. Neatly built, and evidently the abode of plenty, it was covered, at the period of our visit, with a sort of network of vine-branches, which supported a profusion of black grapes, hanging in massive clusters among the green and gold

leaves. Connected with this cottage is a legend, which, though alluded to by several writers of antiquity, has the faculty of remaining always new, and, no doubt, while the mountain endures, will constantly be referred to the "last great eruption."

Possibly the wild romance of this legend, new to Constance though not to me, may have lent a peculiar charm to that sweet cottage, with its clean stucco-floored parlour, and rustic trellised windows. Evening, as we ascended the neighbouring ravine, was already coming on. There was poetry on every leaf. A thrilling sense of the beautiful descended on the heart like dew. Our inmost thoughts were steeped in delight. Nevertheless, in spite of these soothing influences, Paolo (the uncle of Constance) and I contrived to get entangled in the web of politics; but, on turning a thick screen of trees, Constance touched me gently on the arm, and exclaimed—"There, my friend, does the whole East contain a scene like that?"

As we ascended the winding stony pathway, leading through the vines towards the cottage, the owner of the place came forth to meet us. He was a hale old man not far short of threescore years and ten. His welcome wore an air of earnest sincerity. For, my companions being slightly known to him, and their whole air and mien bespeaking inward worth, he experienced that secret satisfaction, without a name in language, which the good always feel in presence of the good. He was evidently not unaccustomed to the visits of strangers; and, while leading the way towards

his dwelling, descanted, with much taste, and in very good Italian, on the magnificence of the landscapes around. Our reception was more hospitable than mere mercenary calculations of gain could have rendered it; and, on inquiry, we found that this wealthy peasant, like the dwarf Ambrogio on the road to Girgenti, possessed the means, rare in Sicily, of comfortably accommodating for the night a much larger party than ours. This point settled, we felt sufficiently at ease to enter with our host into that sort of rambling conversation, full of pleasing embarrassment, in which half-strangers commonly indulge.

From the open window at which we sat, with the coffee apparatus and piles of delicious grapes before us, the eye commanded a full view of a vast gap in the edge of one of the inferior craters of Etna, which, robed in shadow, seemed to impend over our heads Daylight still lingered in the sky, but the moon, then rising, soon caused its presence to be felt; and, in the state of atmosphere thus produced, the numerous cones of Gibello became invested with that phantom-like appearance which Mont Velin, Monte Rosa, the Jungfrau, and Finsteraarhorn, render familiar to the night-wanderer among the higher Alps.

I forget several links in the chain of ideas which, at length, terminated in the narration of the legend. The old man, ignorant of the maddening events that had crowded the interval, referred, in speaking with Constance, to a former visit, made in company with another person. He did not, however, perceive the

big tears which his mal-opportune reminiscence brought into her eyes. To conceal her agitation she threw herself into an open window, as if more completely to enjoy the dusky landscape; but I could distinguish her low sobs, and the violent convulsion of the frame which all her efforts could not suppress.

Luckily our host, who sat near the other window, remained unconscious of what he had done, and thus afforded my fair friend time to recover her composure. "Some years ago," said he, "the first time the good Padre, with this young lady, visited my cottage, I began to relate the very extraordinary event which led to the founding of this humble dwelling; but, other strangers arriving, I was interrupted. You will, perhaps, be not unwilling to hear it now; but, see! here is my wife, returned from Catana. Good Angiolina, you are come back in time; but will you not bid our guests welcome?"

"They are surely welcome," answered the wife; "and so will be one who will enter anon. Giuseppe is in the kitchen."

"What! my boy? Well, he is a good lad. I must a word with him, and will be presently back. But kindle the lamp, Angiolina. Our guests would doubtless prefer it."

We, however, declined the lamp; choosing rather to behold the moon cast its broad masses of silver radiance through the windows. Presently the old man re-entered, and, after several apologies for quitting us, renewed his recital, broken off so near the beginning.

"The events," said he, "happened before my time, during the great eruption which destroyed, almost utterly, the city of Catana, and was attended by thunders and earthquakes that shook the whole of Sicily.

"The mountain, as is well known, observes no stated laws in either the time or manner of its eruptions. Sometimes pitchy clouds, inflamed and streaked below with fire, stretch themselves like an awning over the island, for several days before the lava bubbles over the crater; thus putting on their guard the inhabitants, who accordingly hold themselves constantly in readiness to fly as soon as the fiery streams shall burst their sluices above. On these occasions, therefore, whatever may be the destruction of property, few lives are lost. At other times the case is very different. Death walks secretly within yon vast womb—a deluge of flame and fire mounts in silence to the lips of the crater—neither the shock of earthquakes below, nor smoke in the atmosphere betrays what is going on—and the lava has already rent or overleaped its barriers, and cast itself in torrents down the precipices, before its approach is suspected. Then it is that whole towns and cities are overwhelmed in an hour, and burning rivers poured over their sites into the sea.

"It has been said that we inhabit a paradise spread over the jaws of hell. But wherefore so? Death is the worst thing wherewith the lavas of Gibello are armed; and who will tell me where death is not? We are, therefore, not more apprehensive of

evil from the neighbourhood of this reservoir of subterranean fire, than the good people of Trapani, or any others who live near marshes, are of fevers and agues, probably much more destructive than the fires of Etna. For this reason—to say nothing of the habitual protection of the Virgin and St. Agatha, which the padre" (looking at Paolo) "knows is very effective—for this reason, I say, the Catanians commonly lead as tranquil a life as any other people in Sicily, though they cannot take three steps without beholding mementoes of the ruin their city has seven times undergone.

"But who loves to dwell continually upon evils which, in fact, may never happen? Certain, at all events, it is, that the Catanians by no means suffer apprehensions of this kind to disturb them, but are, in every respect, the gayest and most light-hearted of the whole Sicilian race. This does not, however, prevent the occasional exhibition among them of great heroism and self-devotion, an instance of which led to the founding of this cottage with the name it bears.

"For some years before that terrible eruption which wrapped Catana in a sheath of fire, two young gentlemen, Tomaso and Antonio by name, had distinguished themselves for their gentle and studious habits, which at once rendered them the admiration, and their parents the envy, of the whole neighbourhood. These youth were, nearly as could be, of an age, and so strongly resembled each other in figure, mien, and countenance, that they were often, by strangers, supposed to be twins. But nature had not

continued the resemblance in the structure of their minds. Here they differed totally. For, though both of virtuous habits and high principles, their tastes and inclinations led them so wide apart in the search after happiness, that no two young men in Catana were less together than Tomaso and Antonio. The former, mild, placid, reserved, appeared to have something of hauteur in his demeanour, and kept himself much alone. He loved to converse with the spirits of the long dead, through those mystic characters which bring distant ages together; and, as he rose, by these means, above his companions in knowledge, he, imperceptibly perhaps, imbibed some degree of contempt for them and their pursuits.

"Antonio, on the other hand, loved to mingle much with persons of his own age, joined readily in the dance and the song, and had always a salutation and a smile for whomsoever he met. He was, accordingly, on all sides, the greater favourite. In fact, every one greeted Antonio with a friendly air and hearty embrace; and few pleasure parties were made up in which he was not included. Still, in the midst of all this diffusive geniality, he preserved almost unimpaired his love of study, and his heart remained untouched; while Tomaso had scarcely emerged from the region of boyhood before his affections became entangled by the charms of Maddalena Matteï, his junior by a single year. This youthful passion he took no pains to conceal from his parents. On the contrary, from the native ingenuousness of his character, he

often spoke to them in terms of high admiration of Maddalena, dwelling more, indeed, and more fervently, on the rare excellence of her mind and temper, than on that bloom of external beauty in which she confessedly excelled all the ladies of Catana.

"It is seldom that persons so worthy of each other as Tomaso and Maddalena are brought by circumstances together; and still less frequently, when they have met and loved, are their hearts suffered by fortune to go along with their hands. This made the gossips of the neighbourhood predict very confidently that death, or the disapproval of friends, or the fickleness of the lady, or some other cause equally potent and probable, would, ere long, break in upon the loves of this young pair, and produce the excitement of a tragical catastrophe; of which, as there had of late been rather a dearth of such interesting events, the whole city stood very much in need. Still, as time continued its ordinary pace, and the lovers exhibited no disposition romantically to make away with themselves, the prophets were considerably nonplussed. What was still worse, Maddalena's beauty plagued Tomaso with no rival, who, in a fit of heroism, might have cut his throat, or stabbed, or poisoned him, or performed something worthy of being recorded. All these circumstances considered, it began to be seriously doubted that she really was beautiful. People's eyes must have deceived them. The thing was out of the course of nature. Or, if handsome she could be considered, at least she had not an ounce of spirit, thus

to plod on like any every-day mortal, content with the prospect of happiness in lawful wedlock, with consent of parents, and not a single stain upon her reputation. Ultimately, people grew out of humour with their own skill in foretelling misfortunes; and it was, on all hands, agreed to give up this particular case, as one of the very few exceptions which Fortune, now and then, makes to her general rule. Tomaso himself might often be said to be of this opinion, in which he was greatly confirmed by the unaccountable facility he contrived to enjoy of managing interviews with his beloved; who, though seen daily and familiarly approached, appeared evermore to develope new beauties of sentiment and character, and to rise in her feminine loveliness to the very precincts of the divine.

"A life such as theirs promised to be diversified by few incidents, and seemed likely to proceed as it had begun, to the end. Each day appeared very much like the preceding. They were happy, and nothing more could be said of them. One evening, however, in the beginning of summer, Tomaso having passed nearly the whole day in a rural excursion with Maddalena and her sisters, stole forth with her, before bidding good night, into the garden, to terminate a conversation which, in persons situated as they were, appeared singularly absurd. It was, in fact, a discussion, altogether serious, of their misfortunes; though Providence had hitherto withheld from them the knowledge of what the word means. The human heart, however, is marvellously inventive in the matter of calamities;

and, in the midst of thrilling and gushing delight, seems, like the nightingale, to lean voluntarily against some thorn, as if by self-torture to disarm the Nemesis who unwillingly beholds man soaring towards that felicity which belongs properly to higher natures.

"'I am very far from happy, love!' said Tomaso. 'My heart bounds and flutters at I know not what indefineable apprehension. It seems as if I should lose you yet, either through my own fault or yours. I can, indeed, see no reason, and know no cause for this fear; which, nevertheless, hangs like a cloud over my imagination, and assuredly your tone and manner this evening have been ill calculated to expel it.'

"'Then I have lost my labour,' answered Maddalena.

"'But to what did your labours tend?'

"'Towards dispelling your gloom. But, instead of effecting my purpose, I have myself caught the infection. This, however, may arise from our perfect congeniality of nature; for, perhaps, in the moral atmosphere, as in the physical, plants of the same kind are always simultaneously affected, and droop or flourish together.'

"'It may possibly be so,' answered Tomaso, musingly.

"'And yet,' continued Maddalena, 'it were but reasonable to expect to be cheerful on such a night as this; for assuredly nature was never more lovely. Look upward, Tomaso, on the left. Behold how the evening star glitters between those two horns of the

mountain, like a distant beacon gleaming down a deep valley. And see, too, how in the cloudless east, the moon floats upward through the ether, appearing to diffuse around a warmth with her pearly rays, and weaving about the crests of the rocks and forests a wreath of radiance, like that which trembles yonder on the sea. I feel, too, in the air, a glow and balminess like that of noon; somewhat oppressive, indeed, but sweet, and abundantly welcome in the present state of my feelings.'

"'And see the cause, love!' exclaimed Tomaso, 'in yonder prodigious column of black smoke, intermingled with ruddy flame, which has just reared its crest above the edge of the crater. Heavens! how it surges upward! It seems as if it would devour the stars. There will certainly be an eruption to-night, though neither thunders nor earthquakes have come before to announce its approach. But the heat we feel is as true a signal.'

"'Nay, but it may end in nothing, as such appearances often do,' replied Maddalena. 'And yet, indeed, the volume of vapour is unusually vast. But what a grand spectacle! Never was Gibello more beautiful. The black trunk of smoke springs upward through a gigantic foliage of flame, like the stem of an aloe amidst its leaves. Ah! Holy Virgin! the wind is rising, and driving it, in a pitchy flood, in this direction. It will presently be over our heads, and—but, hark! they call within, and you must leave me, Tomaso.'

"'Maddalena! Maddalena!'

"'Subito, Francesco, subito! There, now, they are growing impatient. Pray, love, go; and let me see you to-morrow.'

"They parted, and Tomaso went his way, slowly and unwillingly, for the gloom, which he had complained of at the beginning of the evening, still hung heavily on his mind. It happened that their dwellings stood at nearly opposite extremities of the city, so that he had a considerable distance to go, and as he walked slowly, it was perhaps an hour before he reached home.

"Old Matteo, the major duomo, or rather factotum of the house, had sat up for him, and had sought to keep off the attacks of sleep by taking a practical lesson in meteorology. In other words, he had been watching the mountain, and observing it belch forth more fire and smoke than appeared to him consistent with a healthy state of stomach, he felt persuaded it would be clearing out in the course of the night; a suspicion which he very frankly communicated to his young master.

"'I can't pretend,' said he, 'that I at all admire the look of the thing. There is something ugly about that smoke. It looks, for all the world, as if the devil had swallowed it, and it had turned colour in his stomach. Depend upon it, sir, there is mischief afloat. The very stars look sick if they get the smallest whiff of it up their nostrils; and I am sure I would much rather they than I, for it must be an infernal dose!'

"'Good Matteo, go to bed,' replied Tomaso.

'You have been watching till you are half asleep, and the hour of dreams is already begun.'

"'Very true, my young master; and I trow many are now dreaming who will not be at the same sport to-morrow night. I remember the eruption that destroyed the village of Cava. The old mountain began opening his jaws exactly as he does at this moment—first, blowing the smoke on one side that he might see his way down the cliffs, and find out in what direction he could best spout forth the lava which made him uneasy in the inside—and before morning nine hundred honest people had been roasted to a cinder!'

"'Ah! and are appearances now as bad as then?'

"'Worse, by a great deal. For, even while we are talking, I see the edges of the crater reddening, like those of a frying-pan which a cook has forgotten, half full of oil upon the fire.'

"The alarming symptoms, however, were not of long duration. The smoke diminished—the flames shrunk back within the crater—no thunders were heard, nor did the earthquake, that ancient concomitant of violent explosions, announce the near approach of an eruption. Matteo owned himself at fault, and wishing the Gibello a good night, comfortably put on his nightcap, and advised Tomaso to do the same. But the lover had secretly determined to watch, and, with this view, placed himself in an arm-chair, near his open bed-room window, which commanded a view of the fortifications on the land side, and over the whole of that broad hollow slope extending from the lofty

base of Etna to the city. Several times, as he gazed on the terrific scene, fresh causes of alarm appeared to present themselves. Dusky clouds, while he marked them not, had gathered overhead. Bright flashes shot up, from time to time, from the crater, and crimsoned the clouds, which seemed to open their bosoms and allow them to pass heavenward. Then darkness, deep as that of Egypt, would wrap the whole prospect from his sight, and produce a corresponding sombreness in his mind. His reflections, however, assumed, by degrees, the form of mere reveries, which, at length, terminated in sound sleep.

"How long he continued in this state is not known. It must have been at least some hours, as we may infer from what took place. When he was roused, it was by the shock of an earthquake, so abrupt and violent that the chair in which he reclined seemed to be raised from the floor. He started to his feet, and, looking round him, knew not, for a moment, where he was. The chamber was filled with thick smoke, and a ruddy glare, as from the mouth of a furnace, entered through the window. On recovering, in some degree, his self-possession, he looked forth, and, behold! a spectacle strange beyond measure, and terrific, met his eye. A flood of fire, issuing from a tremendous gap in one of the inferior craters, having already precipitated itself down the heights, was rolling far and wide over the inclined plane on which Catana stands, and the first waves of the torrent, swelling upward like the bore of the Indus, was even now within a few score yards of

the ramparts. Cries, meanwhile, and shouts, and wailings, and lamentations, mingling in confused murmurs, as when a capital city, with all its matrons and maidens, has fallen by storm, filled his ear. Upon the broad esplanade lying between him and the wall, dark clouds of human beings were sweeping along; while the voice of priests, chaunting a hurried *De Profundis*, was, here and there, audible above the groans and sobs of the multitude. Numerous groups had formed in various parts upon the platform, and, as their dusky figures stood relieved against the blood-red glowing lava that covered the plain, he could distinguish that some were lifting up their hands to heaven, others gazing in stupid amazement at the mountain; others clasping their children in their arms, seemed buried in deep despair. Still the fiery deluge, wave after wave, came pouring on, and, even while he looked, it had reached and filled the moat, and begun to press upon the wall. At this a shout of horror arose from the multitude, and immediately the greater number fled. Scattered at intervals in the distance, trees, detached houses, and small hamlets, were on fire, and the flames of these diminutive conflagrations, light-hued and aspiring upward, contrasted, in a very striking manner, with the dark sullen lava, glowing like a sea of molten iron, but yielding no flame. Above, instead of the lofty, clear, transparent roof of ether, fretted with stars and constellations, which he had viewed with delight on the preceding evening, an awning pitchy black, but reflecting the sanguine glare of the lava, hung low

over the earth, and seemed to have contracted the horizon to the resemblance of a subterraneous vault, through which the lightning flashed, and the thunder pealed, and the earthquake vibrated along, with a rumbling sound more terrible still.

"Tomaso's first thought, when the power to reflect had returned, was of Maddalena. Could he save, and fly with her? Would there be time, before all Catana should be on fire, to reach her dwelling, and snatch her from swift-striding perdition? As the question flashed through his mind, he rushed forth into the corridor, and was hurrying towards the great staircase, when a light streaming into the passage through the half open door of his mother's chamber, arrested his movements. Whither was he going? The author of his days lay there, buried in sleep, which, if he fulfilled his actual intention, would presently be death. There, enfeebled by age, were the hands that had nursed him —there the knees on which his helpless infancy had reposed—there the lips which had taught his own to move in expressions of fondness and joy, and the eyes in whose once bright orbs he had first beheld his own image reflected. The spirit of childhood came back upon him. He thought of the deep fountain of a mother's love. His breast throbbed with the feeling, the noblest and purest which the heart of man knows, that binds the child to the parent and the parent to the child. Every vestige of selfishness fell away like bonds of tow from about his soul. He saw what was his duty, and determined to perform it. Yet not, it

must be confessed, without a struggle. Apprehensions for Maddalena shook his best resolves, and kept him, for some moments, inactive. And yet, could he abandon his mother, in order to snatch any other human being from destruction? She was, indeed, old; and her days must be few and full of trouble. Death, though defeated now, would soon return, backed by nature and decay, and prove an overmatch for his filial love, how strong soever; while Maddalena had probably no less of life than himself to come. And should he turn away from her, and without lifting up his warning voice, behold the burning lava roll over her dwelling, and entomb one so lovely and so beloved in its fiery entrails? As this idea rose in his mind, he made as if he would have stepped forward. But again the light from his dear parent's apartment, falling brightly on the floor of the corridor, arrested his footsteps.

"'Ah, wretched son!' thought Tomaso within himself, 'shall the passion of a day, however hallowed and pure, silence the voice of nature, which, at God's bidding, hath commanded us to honour our father and our mother, that our days may be long in the land? Maddalena, if at this time spared, will one day, perhaps, be old as my own parent now is; and her children, if I set them the example, may for the sake of others, better able than she to fly, desert her feeble age, and suffer her to perish; preferring before her some new object of affection, good, perhaps, but not tried like a mother, the sacred transmitter to us of the

torch of life, kindled at the creation. And my father, too,—the guide of my mind,—shall I abandon him also, bent beneath the weight of years, to be consumed by fire in his bed? Oh, my parents! both worthy, both beloved, forgive that, in this hour, a thought of leaving you could cross my mind. God protect Maddalena! but *my* duty lies here. The tenderness of years may now be repaid in a moment. Antonio! Antonio! rouse thee quickly. We must fly for our lives. Before morning Catana will be no more.'

"In a few seconds, both Antonio and old Matteo joined him in the corridor, and while the latter went to knock up the other domestics, the brothers entered the chamber of their parents. Both were still sound asleep. Their meek placid faces lay near each other on the same pillow, which they had pressed forty years together; and their white locks, escaping from beneath their caps, partly shaded the pale care-worn brow. The mother had evidently fallen asleep in the act of prayer, for her chaplet was still in her hand, while a small silver crucifix lay beside her on the pillow. The sons glanced at the pleasing sight for a moment, and then, gently waking them, explained the fearful necessity, and urged them to make ready for flight. Overcome with terror, they besought the youths to speed away and save their own lives, telling them they had lived long enough, and would be willing to cast themselves at once on God's mercy, and abide whatever might happen. But to this the young men were deaf; and perceiving that apprehension, joined with age, had

robbed them of all energy, they placed them on their shoulders, and, followed by all their domestics, descended into the street.

" Here the uproar and confusion were indescribable. At several points the lava had cast down the walls, or flowed over them, and was pouring through the city, firing the houses, or overthrowing every thing in its course. Multitudes of people thronged the streets. The light reflected from the fiery clouds above shed a tremendous splendour over the scene, and augmented the resemblance to hell existing in other of its features; for all the worst passions of the worst men were now let loose; and, while the earth rocked beneath them, and thunders rolled overhead, numbers of miscreants scoured the city, plundering the palaces, murdering the weak for the riches they sought to bear away, and struggling with each other, with bloody knives and daggers, for the spoils they had collected by crime. Elsewhere, as the pious sons passed onward, bearing their parents from approaching destruction, other groups, agitated by different passions, presented themselves. Some toiled along beneath a load of gold and jewels—others hurried on, leading their wives or children by the hand—while others, neither caring for, nor heeding aught but self, rushed tumultuously towards the northern gate, the road from which, lying over a highly raised causeway, promised the best chance of escape. There were, in that fearful hour, husbands who deserted their wives, and wives who fled before their husbands—there were even parents

who forgot their offspring, and escaped empty-handed towards the gate. But affection, in most cases, proved triumphant over every other feeling. Men thronged the streets with their trembling consorts in their arms —women bore along their infants—sisters and brothers fled together—but, save in the case of Tomaso and Antonio, the aged found no one mindful of their claims.

"The noise of this confused and agitated multitude thronging the narrow streets, and trampling on all who fell, resembled that of the ocean, when it bursts tempestuously on some rocky shore. Shouts and groans, and murmurs and curses, fell upon the ear together, as, urged by the blind instinct of self-preservation, each man strove to outstrip his neighbour, and be first to reach the gate. Compassion, friendship, generosity, seemed to have become extinct. Every thought predominant in the mass, appeared to revolve round one point—self; or, if any feeling overleaped this narrow circle, it strayed no further than household associations impelled. Through this fierce and irrational crowd, Tomaso and Antonio, encumbered by their revered burdens, made their way, with incredible difficulty. The pavement, meanwhile, shook violently beneath their feet, and at length the earthquake grew so terrible, that great part of the city fell, and every one apprehended lest some vast chasm should yawn in his path, and engulf him in an instant.

"By degrees, however,—almost floating onward in a sea of men,—they attained the gate, and felt the comparatively cool breeze of the country on their cheeks.

But the causeway, raised considerably above the level of the surrounding fields, was far too narrow to afford footing for all the fugitives. Numbers were consequently thrust down its sloping sides to the plain below, where the lava tide was spreading rapidly. Among these were the brothers. Terror had necessarily seized, from the first, upon every man, but their fears augmented now, as they discovered, on looking around, that their chances of escape were still slighter than they had hoped. Behind, the homes of their childhood, with every source of subsistence which either they or their forefathers had stored up, were already wrapped in the flames of one universal conflagration. Cast forth together, to the number of sixty thousand,—houseless, half naked, unprovided with a single meal, in the midst of unparalleled lightnings and thunders, upon a country rocking beneath their footsteps like a galley's deck in a tempest, they beheld no place of refuge,—not a single spot where they might hope to hush their alarms, or preserve existence even in destitution. Before them, towards the north, ran a deep ravine, extending from the roots of Etna to the sea, and adown this, a fiery torrent, it was now discovered, had begun to pour itself. Every one, in a moment, understood their position. Could they traverse that hollow before the lava should have reached, and borne away the frail bridge, it might yet, peradventure, be well with them; but if not, nothing remained but to perish in the fires already nearly encircling the space whereon they stood.

"Uttering a loud cry, resembling that of despair, the whole multitude accordingly made a tremendous rush towards the bridge, nearly two miles distant. Events now, however, crowded faster upon each other than I can describe them. Dangers, imminent and appalling, pressed on all sides. Surging forward at their heels, ready to overwhelm the wretch who lingered, was an ocean of lava—on the right lay the sea, —troubled, dark, and thundering, on the tremulous shore; and, on the left, towered Etna,—wrapped in flames and smoke. In front, indeed, Providence appeared to have opened them a pathway, as for the Hebrews through the Red Sea; and in that direction every foot speeded, and every eye was turned, save those of the pious brothers, who, unable to regain the road, struck off sadly, but with all the vigour they possessed, towards a small knoll, rising duskily amid groves and copses on the left.

"Having advanced a considerable way, they stopped short, panting and breathless; upon which their mother cried out,—'Leave us, my children. The Almighty requires that we render up the life he has bestowed; and who can snatch us out of his hands? We already stand upon the brink of the grave, and a few days, at best, will lay us low in it. But for you, my children, God may yet have many years in store. Fly, therefore, I conjure you, by a mother's love—save yourselves! Save the last hopes of our house! O let me not behold the extinction of our race, and, in my last moments, think that I nursed you in vain!'

"'Ay, my brave boys,' added the father, 'ye must fly! I command you. We have lived long enough, since we have seen our children ready to lay down their lives for us. Thank God! thank God for this! Receive my blessing, both of you. Receive it—a father's blessing, and run for your lives. Let me embrace you, my sons! Come, cling for the last time to my heart. There, there! Fly, now, and gain yonder dusky knoll. Ye will be safe there, and I shall die in peace.'

"The sons made no reply, but hid their faces in their cloaks, and wept.

"'What!' exclaimed the old man, 'ye would not, after all, disobey your father?'

"'Ay, for this once,' replied Tomaso; 'and shall obtain your forgiveness. Let us die together, if we must die. For though life be, indeed, sweet to me, and pleasant, I will not, whatever betide, abandon those who gave it me. But, behold the lava approaches again; there is not another moment to lose.'

"Then they again proceeded, steering their course towards the hillock before-mentioned whereon they hoped to find safety, as it seemed too high to be climbed by the lava, and too large to be removed, as hillocks often are, from its foundations. Hope brightened, at every step, in their countenance; but on drawing near, long before they reached the edge of the deep channel which surrounded it, new terrors fell upon them, for a red light shooting up between the bushes, betrayed the existence of a lava torrent flow-

ing between them and the haven of their hopes. This discovery nearly paralysed all their energies. Nevertheless, proceeding in the same direction, they, at length, came up to the brink of the chasm, and, looking down, saw a fiery torrent, full ten yards in breadth, rolling between them and the woody eminence they had looked to as their last refuge. Here the whole family stood still, silently gazing at each other, or casting wild glances at the tremendous scene that met their eyes on every side. For a moment, the awful spectacle before them induced oblivion even of their own peril. All the horrors of Erebus, save its utter hopelessness, were there. Looking downwards, from the slightly rising ground on which they stood, the eye discovered that a broad stream of lava, filling a hollow they had crossed unperceived, now flowed between them and the multitude. Many had reached the bridge in time, and effected their escape ; but by far the greater number, feeble by nature, or encumbered with what they sought to save, had been intercepted in their flight, and now stood on a patch of ground, slightly raised above the general level, but encircled by the fiery deluge which rose every moment, and narrowed the dimensions of their standing-place, scorching them as it came nearer, to madness, and every wave bringing death to numbers on the edge of that terrific circle. Piercing and fearful were the cries that arose from those despairing creatures. They seemed to rend the very heavens, and to be echoed back by the superincumbent clouds. And the little family

group which stood the only earthly spectators of the scene, looked on, not with the curious interest felt by persons beholding a shipwreck from the shore, but as wretches floating on a plank may be supposed to witness the going down of the main wreck, at a hopeless distance out at sea. They expected, in less than one hour, to experience the same pangs—to be cut off by the same fate. Every shout, therefore—every loud groan—every external manifestation of inward agony, exhibited by the sufferers below, sent a thrill of corresponding anguish through their own frames. Never was spectacle so full of dread. The old people, unable to endure the sight, covered their faces with their hands, and sunk upon the ground. Tomaso, however, and Antonio, fascinated, as it were, by the basilisk aspect of death, continued to gaze, with hungry eyes, on the work of destruction. And every minutest feature of the scene was visible; for the bright glare shooting from the glowing lava, appeared almost to penetrate the figures of the sufferers. Now they saw selfishness trampling on every other feeling,—and now love, struggling, even against the invisible elements, to preserve, though but for a moment, the objects beloved. There were mothers seeking to screen their infants, and husbands their wives, by exposing their own bodies as a rampart between them and the intolerable heat. Their sublime self-devotion proved quickly vain. Mothers and infants sunk together; and husbands beside those whom they had loved. The slight eminence occupied by that vast crowd, stood now almost on a level with

the encircling sea of liquid fire. The final catastrophe was fast approaching. Higher and higher rose the blood-red, glowing, strange tide—the heat grew more scorching and intense, and hundreds perished every instant. Yet there were thousands there, in whom the instincts of life still existed in all their force,—and the strong trod down the weak; and the dead and dying, dragged together, formed a kind of raised knoll, whereon the living mounted, in the vain hope of prolonging their wretched lives. But the heat, augmenting as the circle lessened, at length inflamed the air, till it resembled the blast of a furnace, and became too fierce to be endured. There now arose a wild unearthly cry; several men were seen bounding upwards in a convulsive movement; then there was silence—the dark spot diminished rapidly,—the lava rose still higher; and, in a few seconds, a fiery wave swept over the scene, and the population of Catana was no more!

"In circumstances so awful, men appear to be stunned, and, to a certain extent, deprived of their usual sensibility. That is, our powers of endurance are limited, and can only suffer so much. To all beyond we oppose the *vis inertiæ* of inanimate matter, and are, as it were, invulnerable. The brothers experienced this. After the first few violent shocks, their sympathies grew callous, and returned back upon themselves. Their only thought, therefore, was, how they should escape. At this moment a loud crash was heard in the glen below, and looking down, they discovered that an immense tree, burned off at the root by the

lava, had fallen across the burning stream. Here, then, was a bridge prepared for them by Providence! Hope in an instant revived, and with it, all the energy that seemed to have forsaken them.

"'Come,' said Tomaso, 'we are safe. God hath preserved us. We shall yet live. But Maddalena, I fear—'

"'Nay, murmur not, my son, in such an hour as this,' cried his father. 'The same hand is stretched over us all; and, if it be His will, she may have been snatched, as we have, from the jaws of death.'

"Without further delay, the whole family descended to the edge of the lava torrent, and, notwithstanding the extreme heat it emitted, they crept upon the fallen tree, and, with much difficulty, made their way across, the youths aiding their aged parents through the intercepting branches. It was fortunate they lost no time; for, in less than half-an-hour, the rising flood had reduced the tree to a charcoal, and swept its fragments down the glen. Ascending the hillock, with thankful, yet beating hearts, they sat down on its summit to gaze on the desolation extending all around. There they remained till morning, and, in the overflowing of their gratitude, vowed, that if the Almighty would continue His gracious protection, they would spend the rest of their lives on the spot. They were preserved; and, as Maddalena and her family had been among the first who quitted the city, and took refuge in a neighbouring village, the lovers soon met, and were happy. In pursuance of their vow, the brothers, whose in-

dustry supplied all their necessities, erected the cottage in which we are now speaking. Their comforts increased—their parents lived long to bless them; and I, who relate their escape, am a descendant of Tomaso and Maddalena. The people of the neighbourhood, in admiration of the young men, and beholding the blessings which God rained upon them daily, denominated their dwelling the PLACE OF THE PIOUS, by which it will long, I trust, continue to be known."

WINTER.

A Forest Song.

BY C. WEBBE.

COME, old girl, and by the fire
Let us comfortably cling,
While the surly storm grows higher,
And the wild winds hoarsely sing!—
This is not a night, I'm thinking,
For old bones out-doors to bustle,
When the stubborn oaks are shrinking
From the elemental tussle.

Clap the door to! — there, the wind
Saves your trembling hands that trouble!
Look, your old locks stream behind,
And the cold has bent you double!
Mind not Crumply: * — she, I warrant,
Finds somewhere a shed for shelter:
She can bide the windy torrent,
And the mad storm's helter-skelter!

Night, and gloom, and storm are round us,
And these wildernesses dreary;
Heed not — they can ne'er confound us,
While our household shines so cheery.
Oh, that every thing that's human
Cared as little for the storm!
Child and old man — weakening woman,
Safe and fed, and housed and warm!

Thou who pouredst the mighty waters,
Be with them that swim the sea!
Be with thy poor sons and daughters
Wandering earth in misery!
Let thy tender hand, outstretched
Over their uncovered heads,
Keep them, howsoever wretched,
Safe as rich men in their beds!

* The Cow.

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

Night.

Faint from the bell the ghastly echoes fall,
That grates within the grey cathedral tower —
Let me not enter through the portal tall,
Lest the strange spirit of the moonless hour
Should give a life to those pale people, who
Lie in their fretted niches, two and two —
Each with his head on pillowy stone reposed,
And his hands lifted, and his eyelids closed.

From many a mouldering oriel, as to flout
Its pale, grave brow of ivy-tressed stone,
Comes the incongruous laugh, and revel shout—
Above, some solitary casement, thrown
Wide open to the wavering night wind,
Admits its chill — so deathful, yet so kind
Unto the fevered brow and fiery eye
Of one, whose night-hour passeth sleeplessly.

Ye melancholy chambers! I could shun
The darkness of your silence, with such fear,
As places where slow murder had been done.
How many noble spirits have died here —

Withering away in yearnings to aspire,
Gnawed by mocked hope — devoured by their own
fire!
Methinks the grave must feel a colder bed
To spirits such as these, than unto common dead.

J. R.

Oxon.

SILENCE OF THE FIELDS.

Sweet is the silence of this sylvan place
As thoughts of cheerfulness to hearts that weep;—
Sweet as to sick men comes consoling sleep;
Or to the lover his sweet maiden's face; —
Sweet as to sires their children's dear embrace;
Or sight of land to bankrupts of the deep;—
Sweet as the light to him whom dungeons keep;
Or, to the doomed, stern justice speaking grace.
— Oh Silence!— sweeter than harmonious sounds
Of some great organ, with symphonious swell
Making an abbey tremble to its bounds,
And all the air that fills it vocable, —
Oh sacred Silence! spread thy solemn peace
Within this stormy breast, till all its murmurings cease!

C. W.

Painted by J. Harper

THE FORSAKEN.

THE FORSAKEN FRIEND.

BY SARAH STICKNEY.

At early morn these fragile flowers were blowing,
All sweet and fair;
On the wild breeze their odorous burden throwing,
Scenting the air.

At early morn with buoyant step I sought thee,
Friend of my youth!
A blooming garland from the fields I brought thee,
With my soul's truth.

I knew not then thy fickle heart was altered,
Nor read thine eye;
I thought the welcome of thy sweet voice faltered,
But asked not why.

And now I keep these fair but slighted flowers,
Unfaded yet;
Have they not taught me, in a few short hours,
How to forget?

There wanted but one fatal word to sever
Our hearts in twain;
That word thy lips have spoken, and we never
Can trust again.

Thou wilt go forth on summer's fragrant morning,
Once more to see
Her radiant smile the purple hills adorning,
But not with me.

I shall be where no household memories waken
Thoughts of the past;
I shall forget. The lonely and forsaken
Forget at last.

I shall forget thee; many a deeper sorrow
Has been forgot:
But yet I dare not look into the morrow
Where thou art not.

I dare not think how oft my fond heart's yearning
Will wake again;
How I shall watch to see thy smile returning,
And watch in vain:

For thou couldst teach what nothing else had taught me
From early youth;
Not all the wisdom of the world had brought me
So deep a truth:—

That human love, however pure its fountain,
May waste away,
Like the fresh dew upon the verdant mountain,
At dawn of day ;—

That this fair earth, with all its gorgeous beauty,
Its fruits and flowers,
Forms not the scope of human love or duty,
Though once of ours.

HAPPINESS.

O Happiness! thou'rt like the orb of day,—
Thy dwelling 's in the heavens ; but thy ray
Doth often pierce the sin-created cloud
That gathers o'er my head, thy face to shroud :

And thus, thou givest me glimpses, through the gloom,
Of that bright land that lies beyond the tomb ;
And bid'st my heart, which to the base world clings,
Look up from earthly unto heavenly things.

H.

THE BLACKSMITH OF LIEGE.

A Tale of the Burgundian Wars.

BY EMMA ROBERTS.

"Those that feare a matter commonly provide well for it, and have oftener good successe than they that procede with a careless contempt, unlesse God be fully resolved to strike the stroke, against whom man's wisdome cannot prevaile. Which point is sufficiently proved by the example of these Liegois, who had been excommunicated the space of five yeares for their variance with their bishop, whereof notwithstanding they made no account, but continued still in their folly and naughtinesse, mooved thereunto only through wealth and pride. Wherefore King Lewis was wont to say that 'When pride rideth before, shame and dammage follow after.'"

PHILIP DE COMINES.

"NEVER trust me, madam," cried Jacquette, to her young mistress; "but here is the worshipful burgomaster, Wilkin de Retz, in his dress of estate, with two varlets in flaming liveries before him, knocking at the great gate as though he would beat it down."

"Well," returned Linda, "and what is that to me? He is come to make cheer with my kinsman;—brother,

I suppose I must call him, since my poor mother thought fit to invest him with authority over me." And perceiving that her attendant was inclined to prolong the conversation, the fraulien motioned her away; continuing to ply her needle with unconscious industry, while she pondered over her present situation, and future prospects. Linda Wilmsfeldt was the daughter of a poor knight of Brabant, and her mother, being reduced to poverty at his decease, had subsequently accepted the hand of a rich burgess of Liege, who was a widower, with an only son. The burgess and his second wife were both in the grave, and the high spirited girl, proud of her noble descent, and chafing over her scanty means, was left dependant upon her step-father's son; who though not destitute of good qualities, was, like the generality of his fellow-citizens, tyrannical, conceited, and unpolished. Linda entertained a secret dread that her guardian would attempt to usurp an undue control over her; and she justly imagined that the gay attire of Wilkin de Retz had not been assumed without a purpose: she was therefore more displeased than surprised when she received a summons to attend her brother in the hall. Mustering all her courage, she descended to the apartment in which the two worthies were sitting in council together; and the sun's rays streaming in through an open pane in the upper part of the window, catching the rich gold chains with which her visitor had bedecked himself, her eyes were dazzled by the refulgence of these costly ornaments. It soon appeared that

the modest burgess trusted entirely to these gauds, and to his velvet gown furred with miniver, for the advancement of his suit; for he preserved a solemn silence, and Franz Klingsohr, the host, was obliged, after a few preliminary hems, to open the negociation, which had for its object a point of no less importance than the disposal of the fair hand of Linda Wilmsfeldt. The lady, after the approved fashion of gentle dames, declined the offer, modestly, but firmly; the lover uttered a deep sigh which might indeed have been mistaken for a groan; but Franz, of a less imperturbable temperament, burst forth into a torrent of invective, and, after divers reproaches on the score of his ward's obligations to his bounty, vaunted the extent of his own authority, and threatened to compel her to accept the offer of his friend. All the spirit of Linda's martial ancestors flashed out upon this insolent menace. Colouring crimson with indignation, she exclaimed, "Sunk and low as are my fortunes, know, thou base slave of mammon, that I despise thy idol gold; and when next you take upon yourself to propose a match for the daughter of a noble line, choose some fitting suitor; for I tell you, sir, that if you cannot find a man of gentle birth within your city, I will send to the knight, Count Lothaire de Lechtervelden, who now invests your gates; my jeopardy will excuse the indelicacy of the prayer, and should he reject my suit,—which he doubtless will, since I am abased by my connexion with a trader,—rather than wed one of the upstart burghers of this vile city, I will ally myself to

the lowest, and the meanest, — ay to the blacksmith who works beneath yon wall!"

Franz was dumb during this speech, merely from inability to find words strong enough to express his rage. Recovering himself, just as Linda was sweeping out of the room in triumph, he seized her by the hand, and making a strong effort to repress his wrath, desired her to seek her chamber, and remain a prisoner there until she should be prepared to obey commands which he possessed the power to enforce. Gladly flying from the spot, the fair orphan rushed up to her dormitory; but felt a little abashed when reflecting upon the loss of all her self-command, and the somewhat needless display of indignation which had provoked her guardian to draw a heavy bolt across her door, and to detain her in strict confinement. Her rash speech had made a deep impression upon Franz; he was most bitterly incensed by her allusion to the Count de Lechtervelden, who was the scourge and the terror of the inhabitants of Liege; although at this time puffed up with self-confidence, they despised his threat of reducing the city, and treated his approaches with contempt. It was indeed scarcely possible for a place so strong and well fortified to entertain any apprehension from the slender force which the Burgundian knight could bring against it; but while the Liegois felt perfectly secure of the impracticability of his efforts, they would have given half their city, could they, by that means, have got him into their power, and have been enabled to wreak their long cherished desire of ven-

geance upon his head. Lothaire, entrenched in an impregnable fortress, situated on the summit of a hill, which commanded the whole of the adjacent country, and overlooked the city of Liege, had, during more peaceable times, in consequence of a contract not unfrequent in those days, kept the road, from sunrise to sunset, free from all robbers and spoilers; exacting only such a toll from wayfaring passengers, in return for this service, as they were well able to pay. Even when the stipulated hour had passed, and all stray travellers were generally considered fair booty by the knight who patrolled the highways, living, as the phrase went, "by the saddle," he despoiled them of neither life nor property, but took a moderate ransom, and dismissed them in peace.

Notwithstanding these courtesies, the ungrateful Liegois hated the bold knight, who, it must be confessed, took great delight in showing his powers over, and his scorn of the greasy Burghers, as he was wont to call the lords and rulers of the city; and many a time did they attempt, with all their puissance, to dislodge him from his tower of strength; but he repelled their assaults, and obliged them to retreat sorely beaten, and miserably disgraced. And now that, the duke of Burgundy being embroiled with the king of France, the people of Liege had seized the opportunity to revolt, Lothaire mustered a small body of men at arms, threw up works, and laid regular siege to the city, keeping it in check while his master's troops were otherwise employed. It was in vain that the garrison

sallied out, resolved to put this contemptible force to flight; they were unable to carry the very weakest of the entrenchments, so admirably were they constructed, and so desperately did the Burgundians defend their outposts: nor were stratagems of more avail; they were discovered and turned upon the contrivers,—nay, at length, Lothaire, to show his utter contempt for their inventions, and the accurate knowledge which he possessed of every thing that passed within the city, had the audacity to despatch a trumpet regularly every morning to the walls, with orders to proclaim aloud to the garrison the exact nature of the plans which the council of war meditated for the day; and the enraged Liegois having fired upon the flag of truce which accompanied the embassy, and killed the bearer, he swore that he would hang twenty of the delinquents before sunset, and kept his oath.

Stung by his taunts, a picked troop made a sortie, and falling into an ambuscade which he had prepared for them, he erected a gallows in sight of the city, and executed the devoted number to a man. This last merciless exploit raised the ire of all Liege; every mouth was filled with threats and imprecations, and confident expectations were entertained that the knight's head would grace the market-place before twenty-four hours should elapse; but a few only of the warriors who sallied forth to perform the notable feat returned bootless home; leaving the remainder dead, or wounded and prisoners in the enemy's hands.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the name of the

count de Lechtervelden should be poison in the ear of a Liegois; and Linda, as gracious recollections of the kindness which she had received from the family who had fostered her from infancy, came across her mind, regretted her cutting sarcasms. Obeying therefore the gentle impulse which prompted her to seek a reconciliation with her offended kinsman, she despatched a humble and penitent message by Jacquette, praying to be forgiven. Franz, mistaking the motive for this concession, in the true spirit of his townsmen, resolved to impose hard terms upon one who seemed willing to submit; and refused to grant a pardon without a promise from the fair culprit to receive his friend Wilkin in the character of a lover; a requisition which Linda treated with disdain; and was, in consequence, kept more strictly confined than ever, being even deprived of Jacquette's conversation.

Indignation at the treatment which she experienced, enabled Linda to pass the first day of her captivity without suffering from ennui; but the second appeared insupportably tedious; and tired of her embroidery, she stationed herself at the window of her apartment in the hope of finding amusement in the passing scene without. The lattice overlooked the city wall, and was exactly opposite to the forge of the blacksmith, whose hand she had declared herself to be willing to accept in preference to that of Wilkin de Retz. She had often seen the honest artizan before, without however remarking his personal appearance; and she was surprised, and not a little shocked to perceive that he was

a fine well-proportioned man, with a set of remarkably white teeth, and a pair of dark flashing eyes; an enormous bush of hair on his face obscured his other features, and his skin was so grimed with his occupation, that he might have been mistaken for a Nubian; but altogether he possessed sufficient attractions to render the surmise possible, that admiration claimed some share in the choice; and deeply mortified by the supposition that so unpleasant a construction might be placed upon her flippant declaration, Linda was sufficiently punished for the heedless speech. But her vexation did not end here; the blacksmith, probably made acquainted, through the loquacity of the servants, of the flattering mention of his name, was continually turning from his work to gaze at the window of the lady who had honoured him with her regards; and though his demeanour was not disrespectful, a smile played round his lips, and his eyes spoke eloquent things, if by chance they happened to encounter hers.

Linda, driven away from the lattice by the too pointed admiration of her vulgar neighbour, passed the dreary hours in listless solitude. At night, however, when she could look into the street without being visible herself, she resumed her station. The forge had now become a picturesque object as it contrasted with the surrounding darkness. Its lurid fires spread a strong illumination around, displaying the swart figures which moved about in their red light, and throwing out showers of sparks as the heavy hammer descended on the anvil; even the clink of these in-

struments sounded not unpleasingly on the ear; and the bustle, hilarity, and activity which prevailed, both within and without, afforded abundant entertainment for the spectator. Citizens were seen hurrying to and fro, bringing their weapons to be repaired; others led their clumsy, but highly conditioned horses to be shod; the pavement was strewed with armour, and the bright cuirass, and the polished lance, gleamed in the light of the furnace. While surveying the different persons thus busily engaged, Linda could not avoid being struck by the superiority of the blacksmith over all the rest. Prompt, agile, ready upon every occasion, he superintended the work of his satellites, with an air which convinced her that he had been intended by nature for a superior station. He had, moreover, a kind word and a joke for all; and remedying with his own hand any thing that was done amiss, sent away all his customers well satisfied. There was an exquisite grace and ease in his movements which surprised the fraulien; more especially as she perceived, that aware how ill it was suited to his station, he sometimes affected a rustic and clownish manner — an appearance however which he could ill support; for if his attention happened to be called off, he forgot to school his limbs and mien, and the agile spring, the dexterous elegant movement, all betrayed familiar acquaintance with camps and courts.

Convinced that some mystery lurked beneath, the proceedings of the blacksmith became exceedingly interesting to the fair prisoner; and she was further

assured that he was not exactly what he professed to be, by remarking that when the forge was deserted and free from all visitors and lookers-on, he never troubled himself with manual labour, though showing at other times considerable expertness at his trade. He seemed to be more familiar with the javelin than with the coulter, and when freed from the gaze of strangers, he lounged idly over his tools, or tilted against the wall, while his fellow mechanics paid him the most profound respect. It was in vain that she puzzled herself to fathom the secret; and tired at length with fruitless conjectures, she dismissed the subject from her mind, and began to consider how she could best recover her freedom. Franz was inexorable to all her entreaties for pardon, and would accept of nothing less than unconditional obedience.

The burgess had lately obtained an office of some importance in the government of the city,—an elevation which he owed to his friend Wilkin,—and having had the casting vote in two instances,—in one of which he displayed his rigorous devotion to justice, by dooming the criminal to the block, and in the other, his love of mercy, by favouring the more lenient party, —he began to fancy that he possessed the power of dispensing life and death. In consequence of this opinion, his aspect became so terrible, that the household scullions, who had been wont to exchange familiar words with their old master's son, fled from him in dismay; and even the turnspits hung their tails, and slunk away as fast as their bandy legs could carry them,

rushing into the very jaws of the cook at roasting time, rather than face so fierce a personage. There could be no hope for Linda while her guardian continued to entertain these inflated notions of his own dignity; so she made up her mind to a prolonged imprisonment, and, from the mere necessity of taking exercise, busied herself with making alterations in the disposition of the furniture of her apartment. In removing a large press which, for some time, bade defiance to her efforts, a piece of the arras hanging fell from the wall, and in endeavouring to replace it, she touched a secret spring. A panel in the wainscot flew open, and disclosed an aperture, which, upon inspection, proved to be the entrance to a flight of dark, narrow, winding stairs. The necessity of procuring a light to guide her through the mazes of this passage, obliged the impatient girl to postpone her peregrinations until nightfall. A lamp was always sent in with her supper, and without an instant's delay, she set forward upon an adventure which she trusted would enable her to quit for ever a roof which had now become odious. The stairs conducted her to a considerable depth below the surface of the earth, and ended in a passage which she imagined, from the direction it took, must lead across the street. Advancing along this path, she was excessively alarmed by a noise which seemed to proceed from the very bowels of the earth; she paused,—her heart palpitated, and the lamp nearly dropped from her hand; but reflecting that the din of the city, the tramp of horses, and the roll of carts, would come with a strange

and deadened sound upon her ears, she soothed her apprehensions by attributing the extraordinary clamour to natural and common causes. Somewhat re-assured, she moved forward, and, arriving at the end of the passage, another flight of stairs presented itself: these she ascended, and arrested a second time by an alarming sound, she clearly distinguished the hum of voices now close beside her. She paused again, and perceiving a chink in the wall, discovered that she was close to the forge. The stairs ran along the side of a subterranean apartment immediately behind the blacksmith's shop; and Linda was now a witness of a secret assembly in which the blacksmith himself, divested of his beard and other disguises, appeared to be the principal personage. A large excavation yawned in one corner of the room, through which the party ascended and descended, apparently giving orders to workmen below. Linda listened breathlessly to the debate, and stood aghast with horror at the words which struck upon her ear.

"Dolts! cravens! drones!" exclaimed the blacksmith, "had ye possessed the spirit of your brave comrades who work from the Burgundian camp, we should have had the mine completed, and the two avenues joined long ago. Tell *me* not of obstacles! *I* never found one yet. 'Sdeath! the duke our master will escape the toils of Louis, and be at the gates to wrest the glory of the enterprise from our too tardy hands. By the eleven thousand virgins, and the three Kings of Cologne, I swear, that if the city be won without

the assistance of the troops of Charles, I will make you dukes and princes in the land; ye shall drink the health of Lothaire Lechtervelden from golden goblets, —ay and that of the blacksmith's bride. So bestir yourselves, ye loitering knaves; give me the splendid prize I pant to grasp. Here's to Liege and Linda!"

The terrified girl heard no more, but fled in haste from the spot, resting not a moment until she gained her own chamber; and now at no loss to account for the noise made by the pick-axes and spades, which were cutting a passage through the solid earth. Filled with tumultuous emotions, she was distracted by the multiplicity of feelings contending for mastery. Until this moment she had never suspected that the slightest danger threatened Liege: she, in common with the other inhabitants, considered the attempt of Lothaire in the light of an idle bravado, undertaken merely to annoy the citizens; for even in the event of the hostile approach of the duke of Burgundy, no one apprehended any sērious evil, since all previous quarrels between that prince and his fickle subjects had been made up, after a little bloodshed, by the payment of a heavy subsidy; the duke taking care to exact no more than the city was very well able to give. But now if Lothaire should be permitted to execute his project unmolested, Liege would be sacked and placed at the mercy of a triumphant and relentless foe. Could she look tamely on and witness the destruction of a town which had given her shelter in her adversity?—the plunder of its sanctuaries, and the mas-

sacre of its inhabitants? No, no; she would fly to the council and apprise them of their danger; her hand was already raised to give the alarm; but the image of Lothaire, pale, bleeding, expiring, by cruel and lingering torture, swam before her, and she paused. Were there no means of saving him from an infamous and painful death? Must he be cut off in the career of his glory,—he whose gay sallies had made her smile when smiles were strangers to her lips?—he who was so beautiful, and so valiant, whose kindness and courtesy she had so much admired, and who had, even while anticipating the consummation of all his hopes of conquest, pronounced her name with tenderness? She could not, would not betray him. Yet, again, how could she answer it to her conscience to allow him to proceed unchecked in his ambitious purpose? Blood would be upon her soul,—the cry of the widow and the orphan would rise up in accusation to heaven against her: she must be answerable for all the violence committed by exasperated and brutal victors, and she sickened at the bare imagination of all the horrors which would befall the hapless wretches sacrificed to her affection for a man, perchance unworthy of her love. Pressing one hand upon her forehead, and the other over her heart, to still the throbbing pulses which caused its deep emotion, she strove to collect her scattered thoughts, and endeavoured to strike out some middle course by which she might preserve the city, and secure the life of the gallant Burgundian. Plan after plan presented itself, only to be rejected.

Linda knew that she dared not trust to the most solemn oaths taken by the rulers of Liege; they had been too often perjured and forsworn to regard the disgrace and infamy attached to their broken pledges, and she dared not hope that they would forego their long baffled revenge upon one whom they feared and hated more deeply and more bitterly than the prince of darkness himself.

Morning came, and found the agitated girl still undecided how to act; but an incident occurred which determined her to trust to the foes who threatened the gates, rather than to the ungrateful people of Leige.

Franz, whose greatest fault consisted in his too ardent zeal in the service of the government, was arrested at break of day, and dragged to prison upon some frivolous charge; his false friend, Wilkin de Retz, being the accuser. Aware that the disgrace of a person who had been entrusted with a share in the administration, was invariably followed by death, Linda felt assured that her only chance of rescuing her kinsman from the block, rested in a successful negociation with Lothaire. She was fortunately not ignorant of the art of writing,—an accomplishment rather uncommon in that period,—and she therefore needed no assistance in her communication with the Burgundian. She acquainted him with the extent of the knowledge which she had acquired, taking care to conceal the means, and the circumstance of its being limited to her own breast; as she justly deemed that if he knew that his secret had been penetrated by one person alone,

and that a woman, he would contrive some means to prevent it from spreading further. She proceeded to declare her resolution to divulge the whole affair to the council, unless he and his followers would sign a solemnly attested treaty, guaranteeing the security of all personal property, and the safety of the inhabitants from injury and insult; which document she required should be deposited at the shrine of the Virgin in the church of Notre Dame.

Determined not to make a confidant, Linda prepared to be the bearer of her own despatch; and attiring herself in the garb of a page, she threw a cloak over her shoulders, and taking a lance in her hand under the pretence of getting a new point, she stole out of the house, of which she was now sole mistress, and repaired to the forge. The anvil sounded loudly as she approached the shop, in which, as usual, half a dozen men were hard at work. The delicate appearance of the new customer, — an appearance which no art could conceal, although Linda had disguised herself cleverly enough,—excited the merriment of the boors who were busy at the forge.

"What silken spark have we here," cried one, "with his grandame's bodkin to be beaten straight?"

"Gramercy," exclaimed another, "thou art a bold lad to trust thyself with a pointless lance; by'r lady, with a dozen such as thou, we need not fear the Burgundian, though Duke Charles himself headed the onslaught. Go thy ways, elf-ling, thou wilt find needles and thimbles at the tailor's yonder; we deal not in such gear."

Somewhat abashed by this reception, yet resolved to stand her ground, Linda looked anxiously towards the master smith, and catching his eye, made him an expressive sign. The workmen laughed, and whispered among themselves, repressing however the jests which sprang to their lips; and Lothaire stepping forward, started with dismay and surprise as Linda, in a low distinct voice, pronounced his name, and putting a roll of paper in his hand, retreated; the knight not daring to arrest her passage, lest he should be betrayed by the idlers in the street.

Linda had prepared for every thing; she would not return home lest her footsteps should be watched, but entered a church in which she had already hidden a second disguise. Arraying herself in a cloak and veil, which rendered one female only distinguishable from another by the height and size of the wearer, she proceeded to Notre Dame, and stationed herself at a convenient distance from the shrine, choosing a spot in which she was not exposed to observation. Praying fervently for the success of her plan, yet scarcely able to fix her thoughts upon the saint whose aid she sought, she anxiously awaited the time in which she might venture to hope for Lothaire's reply.

Many persons passed and repassed during the period of her anxious vigil, and having performed their orisons before the altar, withdrew. At length the clock struck the appointed hour; she tremblingly approached the spot, and, deposited in the niche which she had named, she discovered and drew forth

the answer of the Burgundian. It contained the pledge which she demanded, and although evidently wrung reluctantly from the knight's hand by the exigence of the moment, it was full, complete, and satisfactory; and Linda doubted not that it would be held inviolate, since the honour of Lothaire de Lechtenvelden, whose name engrossed the parchment, had ever been unstained.

Returning to her solitary home, Linda, aware that the crisis was at hand, stationed herself at a window to watch the event; having, without exciting any attention, taken care to provide for the security of the house. The usual evening crowd had assembled round the forge, and the same bustle and activity as heretofore prevailed; the blacksmith himself was absent: nevertheless, there was no lack of gaiety,—the loud laugh and the oft repeated burthen of some old song, resounded to the clank of the anvil, and the fall of the sledge-hammer. Gradually, as upon former occasions, the assembly dropped off, the fires decayed, and at lengh all was silent and deserted; the Cyclops, apparently tired of their work, withdrawing to seek a few hours of repose.

Midnight approached, was passed, and all remained still and solitary as the grave. Shortly after the clock had struck the half hour, Linda's eyes piercing the deep shade, detected groups of two and three together stealing out under the shade of the overhanging wall, and dispersing themselves noiselessly throughout the city. As the night advanced, the numbers thus

emerging from the forge, increased, and one figure taller, and more commanding than the rest, betrayed the disguised noble to the anxious girl. Soon afterwards a signal struck the watchful Linda's ear: the chimes of the cathedral had been changed; all still remained profoundly tranquil, and as the silvery sounds floated through the calm night-air, they seemed to speak of peace and security, strongly at variance with the coming strife.

Another hour nearly passed; but then there arose a tumult in the city, at first faint, and apparently no more than might be occasioned by some drunken brawl, but afterwards of a more alarming nature; bells tolled, and were suddenly stopped; windows and doors rattled; a cry of "Treason" ran through the streets, mingled with the clashing of swords and the groans of the wounded. Many who would have bestirred themselves, had they known the real cause, believed it to be a popular tumult, and remained quiescent.

At length the drums beat to arms, the trumpets sounded, but all too late; day dawned, and the bewildered Liegois found the arsenal and all the principal places in the hands of Count Lothaire's men-at-arms, the garrison disarmed, and the magistrates in prison. The duke's banners waved from every tower, steeple, and pinnacle; and, before ten in the morning, two of the most factious of the burgesses, men who had burned the Duke Philip and his son in effigy, reversing their arms as those of traitors, had been tried, condemned, and executed, by their fellow-citizens, now anxious to

make a grand display of loyalty. The heads of these men, mounted upon poles, were stuck up at the principal gates, also at the instigation of their late colleagues. No other person suffered, and Franz, liberated from prison by the hand of Count Lothaire, led his deliverer to his sister's feet, and gladly gave his consent to her union with the "Blacksmith of Liege."

THE WIDOW'S SONG.

BY T. K. HERVEY.

Oh! this world is a wide one — for sorrow or joy, —
And where in this world is my own sailor-boy!
With his loud ringing laugh, and his long sunny hair,—
Do they swell on the breeze, yet, and float through the air?
Is there any bright land, 'mid the lands of the earth,
That holds the lost child of my heart and my hearth?

I have sat by the fire when the old men have said
There be eyes of the living that look on the dead!—
Oh! tell me, ye seers, in your search of the tomb,
Do you find my fair son in its valleys of gloom?
Is there any pale boy, with a look of the sea,
'Mid that people of shades, who is watching for me?

Oh, that morn when he left us!—mine eyes are grown
dim,
And see little that's bright, since they looked upon him,
And my heart, in its dulness, hath learnt to forget,—
But the light of that morning shines clear to it, yet;
No record is lost of the far sunny day
When passed my fair boy, like a spirit, away.

We waited—how long!—but we waited in vain,
And we looked over land, and we looked over main;
And ships—oh, how many!—came home from the sea,
That brought comfort to others, but sorrow to me;—
In all those gay ships, oh! there answer was none
To the mother who asks if she, yet, have a son.

And we fed upon hope—until hope was denied,—
Till our health of the spirit it sickened and died;
And his father sat down in his old broken chair,
And I watched the white sorrow steal over his hair,—
And I saw his clear eye waxing feeble and wild,—
And the frame of the childless grew weak as a child!

And the angel of grief, that o'ershadowed his brain,
Now wrote on his forehead, in letters of pain;
And I read the hand-writing,—and knew that the
breast
Of the weary with waiting was going to rest;—
So, he left a fond word for the lost one,—and *I*,
I linger behind him, to tell it my boy.

Shall he come to his home—perhaps sickly and poor,—
And meet with no smile at his own cottage-door?
Shall he seek his far land, from the ends of the earth,
And find the fire quenched on his once-happy hearth,—
None to love him in sorrow, who loved him in joy?—
Oh, I cannot depart, till I speak with my boy!

I have *promised* to wait, — I have promised to say
What grief was his father's at going away.
Will he come — *will* he come? — oh! my heart is
grown old,
And the blood in my veins it runs languid and cold,
And my spirit is faint, — and my vision is dim,
But there's that in mine eye will be light, yet, for *him!*

They tell me of countries, beyond the broad sea,
Where stars look on others, that look not on me;
Where the flowers are more sweet and the waters more
bright, —
And they hint he may dwell in those valleys of light,—
That he rests in some home with a far-foreign bride,—
Oh, this world is a wide one!—*why is* it so wide?

But they, surely, forget — which my sailor does *not* —
That I'm sitting, whole years, in my lone little cot;
He knows — oh! he knows, if I may, I shall wait,
Till I hear his clear shout at the low garden-gate;
He is sure his sad mother will strive *not* to die,
Till the latch has been raised by her lost sailor-boy.

I *believe* that he lives! — were he laid in the mould,
There's a pulse in my heart would be silent and cold,
That awoke at his birth — and, through good and through ill,
Has played in its depths — and is playing, there, still;
When its star shall have set, then that tide shall be dry,
And the widow be sure *where* to look for her boy!

Oh! *will* he come never? — Lost son of the sea!
I hear a low voice that is calling for me:
It comes from that spot, the dark yew-trees among,
Where the grave of thy sire has been lonely too long;
A voice of low chiding! — I come — oh, I come! —
Hath he met my lost boy, in the land of the tomb?

I shall know! — But, if not, — if he comes to the door,
When the voice of his mother can bless him no more,
Some finger shall point to the pathway of tombs,
Where my boy may come up to our mansion of glooms:
And I think I shall hear his light tread o'er the stones,
As the trump shall be heard, in the valley of bones!

THE DESOLATE HALL.

BY THOMAS MILLER,

AUTHOR OF "A DAY IN THE WOODS," ETC. ETC.

A LONELY Hall upon a lonelier moor,—
For many a mile no other dwelling near;
Northward an ancient wood whose tall trees, roar,
When the loud winds their huge broad branches tear.
A large old Hall — a servant deaf and gray,
On me in silence waits, throughout the dreary day.

Before my threshold waves the long white grass,
That like a living desolation stands,
Nodding its withered head whene'er I pass,
The last sad heir of these broad barren lands,—
The last within the old vault to repose:
Then its dark marble door upon our race will close.

The whining wind sweeps o'er the matted floors,
And makes a weary noise, a wailing moan;
I hear all night the clap of broken doors,
That on their rusty hinges grate and groan;
And then loud voices seem to call behind,
The worn and wormy wainscot flapping in the wind.

Along the roof the dark moss thickly spreads,
A dampness o'er the oaken-rafters throwing;
A chilly moisture settles on the beds,
Where lichens 'mid decay are slowly growing,
Covering the curtains, and the damask eyes
Of angels, there enwrought in rainbow-fading dyes.

The toothless mastiff bitch howls all night long,
And in her kennel sleepeth all the day;
I heard the old man say, "There's something wrong,
She was not wont to yell, and howl that way,—
There's something wrong, Oh! ill, and woe betide
The Leech's hand by which my Lady Ellen died."

Sometimes I hear — or fancy — o'er my head
A tramping noise — like that of human feet;
In hollow high-heeled shoes they seem to tread,
And to the sound of solemn music beat:
Then with a crash the window-shutters close,
Shaking the crazy walls, and breaking my repose.

The silver-moth within the wardrobe feeds;
The unturned keys are rusted in the locks;
Upon my hearth the brown mouse safely breeds;
By the old fountain fearless sleeps the fox;
The white owl in my chamber dreams all day,
For there is no one cares to frighten him away.

The high-piled books with cobwebs are o'ergrown,
Their gaudy bindings now look dull and dead;
Last night the massy Bible tumbled down,
And it laid open where my Ellen read
The night she died — I knew the place again,
For she shed many a tear, and each had left its stain.

Oh, how I shun the room in which she died,
The books, the flowers, the harp she well could sound!
The flowers are dead, the books are thrown aside,
The harp is mute, and dust has gathered round
Her lovely drawings, covering o'er the chair,
Where she so oft has sat, to braid her long brown hair.

What hollow gusts through broken casements stream,
Moving the ancient portraits on the wall;
I see them stirring by the moon's pale beam
Their floating costumes seem to rise and fall;
And as I come or go, — move where I will,
Their dull white deadly eyes, turning, pursue me still.

And when a dreamy slumber o'er me creeps,
The old house-clock rings out its measured sound;
I hear a warning in the march it keeps, —
Anon the rusty vane turns round and round:
These are sad tones! for desolation calls,
And ruin loudly roars around my father's halls.

The fish-ponds now are mantled o'er with green,
The rooks have left their old ancestral trees;
Their silent nests are all that now is seen;
No oxen low along the winding leas;
No steed neighs out, no flocks bleat from the fold;
Upland, and hill, and vale, are empty, brown, and cold.

And dance, and song, within these walls have sounded,
And breathing music rolled in dulcet strains;
And lovely feet have o'er these gray stones bounded,
In snowy kirtles and embroidered trains;
Such things have been, and now are gliding past,
And then, our race is done:—I live, and die,—the last!

THE FLOWER "FORGET ME NOT."

Forget thee? Remembrance
In death will be shaded,
When, from her far vision,
Thy bright hues have faded.
O, who that has seen thee
Enshrined by the shower,
Can ever forget thee,
Thou beautiful flower?

H.

THE TWO PORTRAITS.*

BY W. H. HARRISON.

I.

How fair! how passing fair! but why that pensive upward gaze,
As if the shade, by sorrow made, had fall'n on thy young days?
Yet now I see, whate'er they be, thy cares are few and light,
For thy sister sits beside thee, all in sunny smiles bedight.

Then what should make thee pensive? Has thy pet canary flown,
Impatient of thy bondage sweet which kings might proudly own?
And do his jocund notes no more make musical thy bower?
Or has some truant dearer still, o'erstayed the trysting hour?

* See Frontispiece.

In that slight shade of sadness there is such a charm,
I trow,
I cannot chide the truant wight — be it the bird or
beau: —
Nay, I could bid him linger, if his coming would
dispel
That look of pensive loveliness, for it becomes thee
well.

II.

And thou, whose lip is wreathed with smiles, in that
joy-lighted eye —
Bright mirror of thy mind — a heart unscathed by love
I spy;
And, on that fair and polished brow, I read a high
disdain
Of the sex grim old grammarians call the worthier of
the twain.

"The worthier sex indeed!" methinks, I hear thee
scornful say;
"'Tis made up of two sorts of fops — the solemn and
the gay;
Who, void of grace and gallantry, whene'er domestic
rubs
They get, — barbarians as they are! — recourse have to
their *clubs*."

But vaunt not thou, for, doubt it not, the time will
quickly be
When thou'lt exchange for pensive looks that smile of
girlish glee;
And find a *rara avis* yet among the sex so slighted,
And, 'spite of all thy scorn of clubs, be one of the
UNITED.

•

A PRAYER.

LORD! I have bowed with fervour at the shrine
Of Beauty, Fame, and Friendship; but to thine
How coldly have I bent the formal knee;
The while my truant heart was far from thee.

But do thou aid my weakness with the strength
Of thy sufficient Spirit; till, at length,
I burst my bonds, and from its throne is hurled
That worshipped Dagon of my heart—the World.

H.

ZEIR'S LAMENT FOR THE FALSEHOOD OF LEILA.

From the Arabic.

BY W. C. TAYLOR, LL.D.

Zeir, a petty prince of the Mogrebbins, or Western Arabs, was betrayed and abandoned by Leila, a wife whom he passionately loved. He wrote several elegies on her loss, and "Zeir's grief for Leila," was long a proverb for sorrow disproportionate to the occasion.

Thoughts that I dare not speak,
Thoughts full of sorrow;
Ere this poor heart shall break,
Some symbol borrow:
A symbol to tell the fair
Who has undone me,
How dreadful is this despair
Resting upon me.

Take not the tempest's gloom,
Darker my night is;
Take not the red simoom,
Fiercer her blight is.

Let not Zahara's sand
As sign be taken;
More silent and lone I stand,
By her forsaken.

Point not to rugged rock;
More unrelenting,
Leila, with sudden shock,
Left me lamenting.
The voice that proclaimed my wrong
Call not the thunder;
Leila's more deep and strong,
Rent me in sunder.

The glance of the faithless eye
Say not was lightning;
That to the darkest sky,
Lends a brief bright'ning:
Her look of deadly blight,
Her base endeavour,
Over my soul sent blight,
Once and for ever.

Weep ye not for the dead,
Calmly they're sleeping;
He whose last hope is fled,
Merits your weeping.

With deep and with cureless wound,
Ever he's bleeding;
And a serpent twined round,
On his cold heart is feeding.

For him in his living tomb,
Never comes waking;
Over his mental gloom,
No light is breaking.
Life is to him no life,
Buried in sadness;
But vain and hopeless strife,
Ending in madness.

Dig my friends, dig my grave;
Too long I languish:
Why should you strive to save
Torture and anguish?
Ne'er had I made a moan,
Though racks had wrung me;
Death-grief extorts one groan —
"Leila hath stung me."

He stopped. Of life there was no farther token;
In that last groan, a noble heart is broken.

Painted by T. M. Joy. Engraved by W. F. Simmons.

THE CAPTIVE'S WIFE.

Published by Smith Elder & Co. 65, Cornhill.

THE AVENGER.

A Tale of the Western Ocean.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TOUGH YARNS."

"Is there no offence in it?
None—none in the world!
It bears a moral."

A BEAUTIFUL bay is the Bay of Massachussets, with its many inlets and snug coves, and the numerous sunny islets that seem to have quarrelled with the main land, and shoved off to rest upon the bosom of the waters in peace and quietness. With what delight must the persecuted victims of intolerance and bigotry have hailed this refuge after a long voyage! And yet, though driven from the place of their nativity for conscience sake—though their very existence had been held at a price in the home that gave them birth, the love of country still predominated: the treasured name which commanded respect from all the world was cherished with sentiments of pride, and

New England became the dwelling of the strangers who had no wealth but industry, no mines but the rich alluvial soil that was to give them daily bread. Happy would it have been for them, if, having suffered persecution, they had learned mercy; but this was not the case, for though they had undergone bitter hardships to maintain their faith, they themselves became cruel oppressors to all who differed from them in religious creed. The early settlers were but few, and these were much diminished by the attacks of the Indians; yet the accounts brought over to England of the fertility of the earth, induced other adventurers to bid farewell to the white shores of Albion, and cross the ocean to the western world. The arbitrary measures of Charles, and the unrestrained oppression of Laud, soon so swelled the number of the expatriated, that one of our historians observes, "in about twenty years after the first settlement, four thousand families, consisting of upwards of twenty-one thousand souls, passed into New England in two hundred and ninety-eight vessels."

The period of which I write, is nearly one hundred and fifty years subsequent to the first landing in Massachussets Bay, when labour and ingenuity had done more for the hardy settlers than the coveted gold mines of the Spaniards could have effected. They gained their living by the sweat of their brow, and they learned to love the land from which they derived their support and nourishment. The Spaniards trusted to the supposed unbounded extent of the precious me-

tals, and became enervated and dissolute; having no local attachment to the West, and eager to quit it as soon as the demands of avarice were appeased. The English knew the inexhaustible bounty of Providence where its gifts were cherished and matured. Their habits blessed them with energy and health, and their adopted home became to them an object of legitimate esteem. Populous and thriving towns gradually rose up and expanded—the co-operative system by barter, which had at first prevailed, grew at length into flourishing trade—commerce spread her white sails, filled with the breath of enterprise—and heaven smiled upon their efforts, for its best birthright, liberty, was engrafted in their hearts.

It is no part of my intention in this narrative to touch further upon politics than facts, and the interest of the incidents may require; but it is certain, that the statesmen of Great Britain never committed a more egregious mistake than when they framed obnoxious laws (knowing them to be such) for a distant colony, without either physical strength or moral influence to enforce obedience.

Taxation to a certain degree commenced its career, when, by an act passed in the sixth of George II., duties were imposed on rum, sugar, and molasses, imported into the colonies; but this was evaded by illicit traffic, and no one considered himself disgraced by carrying it on. Smuggling produced a hardy, bold, and intrepid race of seamen, who set the laws at defiance; and numerous men-of-war were stationed along

the coast, and in the West Indies, solely for the purpose of repressing it; so that the expense of prevention must have counterbalanced the receipt of customs. Besides, as a considerable portion of each prize was divided among the captors, it was, in many instances, a premium for unjust detention and conviction; and the hatred which grew up between the crews of the king's vessels, and those of the free-trade, was of the most deadly nature.

The accession of George III. to the throne, was the season selected by the ministry to attempt that which the wary Sir Robert Walpole had acknowledged he did not possess sufficient courage to undertake, viz. the stamp-act for the British colonies. The settlers were aroused to determined resistance, and the most resolute amongst them were those of Massachussets Bay. The law was rendered a nullity through the hardihood of its opponents, and the alarm of those appointed to administer it. At length, from the impossibility of effecting the design, the stamp-act was repealed, and its repeal was hailed as a great moral victory, achieved by daring bravery; and thus two important truths were at once impressed upon the conviction of the colonists. First, it was considered as the triumph of right principles over an unjust enactment; and, secondly, it showed them their own power of resisting what they looked upon as oppression. Other modes of taxation, however, were resorted to—the coast-guard was kept up with increased vigilance—an American board of admiralty

was established—and extraordinary powers granted to the officers of the navy to enforce the revenue laws.

Amongst the most active of the king's cruisers was the Gaspar schooner, commanded by Lieutenant D——, a man extremely rigid in the execution of his duty, and indefatigable in his researches after contraband goods. He was also a great stickler for national honour, and compelled all vessels not carrying a pennant to salute his majesty's schooner as they passed, either by striking their colours, or lowering their loftiest sails. Such conduct (and which is reputed to have been exercised with great severity), caused him to be the object of much ill-will. His station was off Rhode Island, and he had, on several occasions, detained the craft, and considerably impeded the traffic, of Mr. John Hancock, a merchant of high standing and great influence in the town of Boston, and who had early taken a leading part against the enactments of the British legislature, so that his fellow-townsmen looked up to him for advice and assistance in cases of emergency. It cannot but be supposed that all in the employ of such a man imbibed from him the same inflexible principles, and the same unchanging love of liberty; but in none did the feeling glow with more fervour and stability than in the breast of one of his young men—Ezekiel Hopkins of Nantucket.

A few miles from, and below, the town of Providence, on the shore of a snug little bay, stood a rustic cottage, that, for beauty of situation and neatness of appearance, might have vied with many a

modern erection of a similar nature on our own shores. It was inhabited by the widow of a deceased officer in his majesty's service, and her only daughter, an interesting and pretty girl of nineteen, who had attracted the attention of Lieutenant D——, of the Gaspar, and gained his admiration as far as it was in his nature to cherish the passion. But Melicent Hargood entertained no responsive sentiment, for her affections had already been bestowed upon Ezekiel Hopkins, then not only one of the best looking young men of the day, but acknowledged to be the foremost in every gallant feat or perilous exercise; and though the lieutenant was graciously sanctioned and supported as a staunch royalist and naval officer by Mrs. Hargood, whose husband had been both, Ezekiel found a much stronger ally in the young lady's heart, notwithstanding he had been forbidden the house, and only paid his visits by stealth. It may naturally be concluded, that strong hostility and angry feeling pervaded the mind of each of the suitors. The lieutenant, however, relying on his rank, and the assurances of the mother, treated his rival with contempt; whilst Ezekiel, being of sanguine temperament, could ill brook the haughty demeanour and rudeness of the schooner's commander.

It was in the twilight of a lovely evening, the sun had disappeared behind the mountains, but the sky was still glowing with his radiance, when a whale-boat pulled up along shore, and landed Ezekiel in a small grotto-like cove, about a mile from the cottage, where it left

him, and pursued its course to the town. The young man leaped upon the beach, and stood concealed behind a jutting point of rock, that had often served him on a similar occasion. In appearance he was the very beau-ideal of a seaman—no snow could be whiter than his duck trowsers and his linen shirt—the black handkerchief round his neck was loosely knotted, and the ends secured between the blade and the hasp of a miniature knife—his curly hair hung down in ringlets beneath his straw hat, and clustered on a face glowing with health and good humour—his blue jacket, of superfine cloth, was thrown on with a careless grace—in fact, he was the very being to make a woman proud of her conquest. He did not wait long, for a white muslin dress fluttered in the breeze—Melicent turned the projecting point, and, in an instant, was in the arms of her warm-hearted lover.

"My own noble-minded lady," exclaimed Ezekiel, "you have not then been induced to forget your humble sailor for that tyrannical man, who claims you as his right because he wears the king's uniform."

"Hush, Ezekiel," returned the maiden, "perhaps I have come to tell you that our correspondence must end, and Lieutenant D—— is to be my future guardian."

"Nay, Melicent, nay," rejoined the young man, with impassioned energy, "you cannot mean it. You love him not—he is a stranger to such a holy sentiment—and would you, dare you, Melicent," he uttered solemnly, "give your hand, and bind yourself to one whom you must loathe? No, no, dearest,"

added he, "you have conjured up a phantom, merely to chill my blood on this warm and beauteous evening. Speak, dearest, speak! Is the rest of my existence to be bound in shallows and in misery, without one sunny smile to break in upon the dark tempests of the soul? Nay, nay, you are but trifling with me."

"Indeed, indeed, Ezekiel," remonstrated she, as the rolling tears formed a channel down her pale cheek, "I would not have so thoughtlessly expressed myself, could I have foreseen my foolish words would thus have stirred you. No, Ezekiel, I am unchanged, and unchangeable, though ——"

She was stopped by a wild and hysterical burst of laughter from the young man, which echo repeated in many unnatural sounds, as he strained her to his heart, and then sinking on his knees, as the big drops oozed from every pore with previous agony, and his eyes were dim with the overflowing of succeeding joy, he uttered, "Gracious Heaven, I thank thee!" He bowed his head upon his hands, and the strong man wept like a child.

"Since last we met, Melicent," said he, as soon as his emotion had subsided, "I have had an interview with that haughty officer—he has seized my vessel—put me in gaol—threatened me with the heaviest penalties, and, so help me Heaven! unjustly; for my only fault was not striking my colours to him. I have escaped from prison, love, through the assistance of some old shipmates, and here I am, that you may read my fate. Say, love—oh! speak the words

again, that your affection is unchanged, and unchangeable."

"It is, Ezekiel—it is," returned she, as her white arm was thrown over his shoulder, and her pallid cheek was pressed to his breast. "My Creator will bear witness to my constancy and truth. Yet, Ezekiel, I am hourly urged by my mother to accept the lieutenant's offers. He has even been to the cottage this afternoon, and probably may be there at this very moment. I am beset with trials—the people look upon us with suspicious eyes as being royalists—and oh, Ezekiel! were you but in the same cause ——"

"Avast!" exclaimed the young man, with a shudder at the proposal; but instantly recollecting himself, he uttered, "Forgive me, my own love! circumstances have made me impetuous, and I forget myself. I am no enemy to your king, Melicent—no traitor to his crown: it is the false friends to both that are inciting him to think ill of subjects that would reverence his person, and respect his authority. But I am a man, Melicent,—God has made me a man; and I will not be a slave to crouch and bend to my fellow-creatures. My ancestors were driven from their country and their home. They arrived here, destitute and friendless; planted the soil, reaped the fruits, and became independent. Is their industry to be taxed for the purpose of maintaining a regal state in a kingdom which we shall never see? Are our rights, as human beings,—our privileges, as citizens, to be wrested from us?—But I am wrong, dearest—very wrong to talk thus to

you. Yet do not tempt me, Melicent, to betray my heart's honour. No, no, you will not; for should I yield, you, Melicent—you would be one of the first to execrate my treason."

"I do not well understand these things," returned she, after listening attentively to his short harangue. "But you are—you must be in danger here. Whither will you go for safety, Ezekiel, and how am I to ascertain that you are free, and in security?"

"Have no fear for me, dearest," answered the young seaman; "but think how best I may serve you in the hour of peril that is approaching. Oh, Melicent! give me but the right to call you mine, and that commander of the Gaspar——"

"Is here to answer for himself," exclaimed the lieutenant, turning the point, and suddenly appearing before them. "Miss Hargood will pardon my interrupting so interesting a conversation," (bowing with mock deference) "but I have a duty to perform. That fellow by your side (Ezekiel's face flushed crimson), has made an outbreak from the lodging I provided for him.—(He drew a pistol from his vest)—Surrender, sir, or, by heaven, you shall have the contents of this through your head!"

"I can meet you on your own terms, lieutenant," returned Ezekiel, proudly; and in an instant, snatching a similar weapon from his breast; "yet I thirst not for your blood, therefore, seek not mine!"

"Forbear—forbear!" shrieked Melicent; "Mr.

D——, you have no right to haunt my steps—I am, and will be free."

"Granted, Miss Hargood," answered the officer, ceremoniously raising his hat, and bowing. "Your path to the cottage is unimpeded—some of my men shall attend you." He shouted "Gaspars!" and in an instant half-a-dozen stout seamen swung round the point, and ranged themselves in the rear of their commander. "Men," added he, addressing them, and pointing to Ezekiel, "there is your prisoner!"

"They must capture him first, I presume," said Hopkins, proudly; "'no catchee, no habee,' is an old Negro saying; and it is odd to me if I do not make it true. Miss Hargood, let me entreat you to return home. One of those brave men, whose obedience to orders show them to be worthy sons of the ocean, will see you safe. Fear nothing for me."

"Mr. D——! Ezekiel! I cannot leave you thus!" remonstrated Melicent, half sinking with emotion and alarm. "Go, Ezekiel, and trust to my word." Ezekiel inclined his head, and pointed to his opponents. "Mr. D—— stand back, and do not impede his way."

"Mine is a hard duty, Miss Hargood, which compels me to refuse the request of a lady," answered the lieutenant, with much composure, "especially a lady whom I one day hope to call my wife."

A fierce flash shot from the dark eyes of Ezekiel, but he offered no answer, and, the next moment, an elderly lady made her appearance round the point, fol-

lowed by a concourse of armed men. Ezekiel knew the mother of his Melicent in the person of the female, and he saw his rescue in the party who had unperceived followed her. Now, Mr. D——," said he, "the fortune of war is against you, and you have no alternative but to surrender, for I cannot believe you would peril the lives of those gallant men against such odds. Believe me, sir," he added, sternly, "you will want them soon."

Mortified and humbled at being thus entrapped, the lieutenant felt the true force of his rival's observation. He was no coward, and would have suffered death rather than have yielded, but his men were precious in his eyes. "You have doubled upon me, young man," said he, "but I will not give up my arms."

"Your sword you are welcome to keep, and would to God that it were drawn in more honourable employ than persecuting those who speak your father-tongue! Your ammunition, however, must be taken away, for as you look upon us as lawless, so you would not give your word to refrain from firing when we depart; and believe me, sir, it would pain my heart to think I had been the cause of death even to you, who have sought my life.—Disarm them, shipmates, and take away their cartridges; knock the powder out of the pans, and dip the muskets over overboard."

The order was punctually obeyed, as Ezekiel and Melicent stood whispering apart. He took a white scarf from off her shoulder, and bound it round his arm—he placed a ring upon her finger, and raised the

hand to his lips, and they bade "farewell;" then, proudly saluting the lieutenant and Mrs. Hargood, he placed himself at the head of his friends;—two whale boats rounded the point, and received them, and their sinewy arms made the swift vessels fly over the yielding element.

The last words that Hopkins uttered when passing the lieutenant were, "Sir, we shall meet again."

"It will be a sad meeting for you, my lad," returned he, as soon as the boats shoved off; then, turning to Mrs. Hargood, "Madam, I am truly sorry that you should have witnessed my discomfiture, but—"

"Talk not of your own personal inconvenience, Mr. D——," replied the lady; "it is the degradation which has fallen on his majesty's sacred colours that troubles *me*, sir. Oh, Melicent, Melicent!—had your father lived—"

"Pardon me, lady," said the lieutenant, as he offered her his arm to return to the cottage; "Miss Hargood, I believe, is in no way to blame in this transaction; and it grieves me that so fine a young man should be in any other place than the deck of a man-of-war. Thither he must be sent, and I make no doubt, with a smart captain, would become a good seaman, and faithful subject."

Melicent felt the taunt, but deemed it prudent to say nothing, and the remainder of their walk was in silence. The lieutenant left them at the cottage-door, and hastened on board his vessel, under a hope, as there was a fresh breeze, of catching the whale-boats,

but it was dark before he reached the shore; and so much time had elapsed when he got to the schooner, that all pursuit was hopeless, and he stood out to sea.

Several months elapsed, and Melicent's heart sickened at hearing no tidings of Ezekiel. The lieutenant had made frequent calls, and his manners had assumed more tenderness and respect, as his observations made him better acquainted with the young lady and her determination to enjoy a will of her own. His visits, however, were viewed with suspicion by the respectable portion of the neighbourhood, who strongly entered into the spirit of the times; whilst the poorer classes, though constantly partaking of the bounty of Mrs. Hargood, no longer esteemed the gifts that came from the hands of a royalist. Melicent was, consequently, much alone, and her days became so monotonous, that even the society of the lieutenant grew less irksome—nay, even relieved the dullness which hung around the cottage. Mrs. Hargood suffered more severely than her daughter, for, being strongly attached to the royal cause, and nervous and irritable in temperament, she felt every indignity offered to the former as a personal insult to herself, till, at last, a severe attack of illness confined her altogether to her room; and the indefatigable, and now really attentive officer, was the only one who adhered to them in trouble. Still he vainly importuned the maiden to look upon him in another character than simply that of friend; all his assurances of kindness and protection were unavailing

to alter her mind—she remained firm in her attachment to Hopkins, though his long absence was a source of deep affliction. For hours would she stand upon the beach, with a glass that had belonged to her deceased father, looking at every craft that appeared upon the coast.

Towards the close of the afternoon of the 9th July, 1772, two vessels were seen standing in from sea, towards Providence; the nearest was a lovely little cutter, that skimmed the water like a duck, and her spread of milk-white canvass aloft seemed like an immense silvery cloud attached to a small black speck—the one more distant was the Gaspar schooner, carrying on a taut press in chase. Both had their colours flying, and a shot from the latter sometimes dashed up the spray a-head of the cutter, and, at other times, came dancing alongside; but she still pursued her course, utterly regardless of the thunder of the schooner, or the close approach of her bolts. Numbers thronged to the beach to watch the exciting spectacle, and, as the cutter continued rapidly to near them, there were secret whisperings, and mysterious communings amongst the seamen, young and old; whilst every flash that proclaimed the discharge of a gun, was viewed with the utmost anxiety, as if the shot had been directed at themselves.

Melicent could not but be sensible that something extraordinary was going on, for her nautical knowledge had already pointed out to her the relative position of the two vessels; but what caused her the most sur-

prise was to find herself an object for much closer scrutiny than she could well account for; her glass however soon solved the problem, for, as the cutter hugged the wind in-shore, persons and things became more clearly defined on board of her. The atmosphere was lucidly clear, the breeze was steady on the smooth water, and the man at the cutter's tiller was watching his sails, with the practised eye of one who knew well the peculiarities of his lively craft. But there was also another man, kneeling, or stooping by the runner, with a glass in his hand, which was pointed directly at Melicent—a sudden and unaccountable tremour shook her frame, so that she could hardly steady the telescope; but it passed away, and again she looked—the man stood upright for a moment, and waved aloft something white. An instinctive impulse induced Melicent to answer the communication with her handkerchief—the signal was instantly returned from the cutter, and the man disappeared. All this had passed without one thought that the surrounding throng had witnessed the transaction, for Melicent's heart was flying, on the wings of hope, towards the little vessel that came bounding along the mimic waves, dashing the feathery spray over her bows, and leaving under her stern a track of hissing foam. Onward, too, came the schooner—and the fair girl could distinguish the lieutenant holding on by the main rigging, and watching, with the keen penetration of a seaman, the motions of the flying cutter. A secret conviction crossed her mind, that both her lovers were before her, as declared enemies to each

other. The fact, for an instant, shook her fortitude, and she gazed round as if to search for some corroborative truth; and she found it, for all eyes were fixed upon her, yet none approached, as it was unknown which of the two she favoured, and this division of opinions gave rise to numerous disputes amongst them, which she heard not.

Nearer and nearer came the pursued and the pursuer, and stronger grew the excitement amongst the assembled crowds upon the beach; nor could the shots which fell at no great distance from them, (so close were the two craft,) drive any one away. Suddenly the cutter came right up into the wind's eye; her sails trembled, and were worse than useless; still she shot a-head, as if nothing could impede her way, and thus she continued, till her progress was nearly arrested; when again paying off gracefully, her canvass once more swelled in the breeze, and a loud and tumultuous burst of applause ascended from the seamen on the shore, which soon ceased, and the same breathless attention prevailed—the gaze being now eagerly directed at the schooner as it had previously been to the cutter.

This was all incomprehensible to Melicent—her very spirit sank within her when she witnessed the manœuvre of the cutter, and some one loudly uttered near her, "It is all over with him now, and he'll be caught at last." The shot from the schooner was rending the cutter's sails, and the lieutenant was coming up with his rival hand over hand, when, in an instant, a check

was given to the Gaspar's speed, and the next, she was fixed hard and fast upon the narrow bank, through a gully of which the cutter had passed when she luffed up into the wind. It was a desperate experiment, but it succeeded, and the lieutenant had fallen into the snare thus laid for him.

Up rose the shout again, as the sheets and tacks of the schooner were let go, and the sails, freed from restraint, flapped fiercely in the breeze. "I told you he'd be caught!" exclaimed the same voice which Melicent had before heard, "and there he is, boys, hard and fast, every nail an anchor—my eyes! but 'Zekiel's a clever chap." The cutter stood on unharmed towards Providence, and the crowd dispersed. Melicent, however, continued on the look-out, and observed a small boat quit the cutter with two men, and she quickly returned to the cottage. The darkness of evening had already closed in when she entered her mother's apartment, and without saying one word of Hopkins, she communicated the lieutenant's mishap. Heavy was the mortification and chagrin of the worthy lady, but still she expressed the most sanguine hopes that, with so able and clever a commander, the schooner would soon be afloat again, and at day-light they should see her as gay as usual, with her colours flying and sails nicely trimmed. Mrs. Hargood knew not that she had grounded at the very top of a full tide, and could not be released till the ensuing one returned.

Obscurity veiled the face of nature as Melicent, arrayed in a dark dress, hastened to the cove. All was

silent except the wash of the receding waters upon the rocks; and all was loneliness, relieved only by the reflection of the gorgeous stars upon the bosom of the deep. Still occasionally might be heard the voice of the seamen on board the schooner, as if engaged in some laborious duty, but the distance was too great for the eye to trace her situation. Suddenly the light fall of oars, as they struck the liquid waves, was heard. Melicent concealed herself from view as a boat emerged from the gloom; some one sprang on to the shore, and the little bark again retreated behind the projecting point. Melicent heard the well known clap of the hands by way of signal; but, fearful of deception, she did not move till a voice, which filled her soul with trembling ecstasy, uttered in a low and mournful sound, "She is not here." Another clap, and Melicent was in his arms.

"My own—my faithful love!" exclaimed Ezekiel, pressing her to his heart, "do I hold you once more in my embrace? May the God who knows the secrets of the spirit search mine and witness its overflowing gratitude!"

"Ezekiel, you have been long absent," said she, "and I have poured forth my fervent petitions to Heaven for your safety. We are now restored to each other, and here upon this spot, rendered sacred by endearing recollections, here let us thank the Great Being who has heard and answered my humble prayers."

Together they kneeled at the footstool of Omnipo-

tence, and, with sweet communion of heart, did their praises and thanksgiving ascend before the throne of Grace, an acceptable offering to the Deity. They arose, and Ezekiel explained that, notwithstanding the forbearance he had shown to the lieutenant, the latter had offered large rewards for his apprehension, so that he was compelled to make a distant voyage; but, on his return, he was again placed in peril,—so unmitigated was the persecution against him. Under these circumstances, Mr. Hancock had fitted out the cutter for him to trade amongst the West India islands, and he was running down to Providence to take in a light cargo, as well as for the purpose of seeing Melicent, when the schooner hove in sight and fired at him to bring to; which, for obvious reasons, he did not dare to comply with—the chace took place, and events occurred such as have already been described. Many of the seamen on the shore knew the cutter and who was master of it, and he had reasons to believe that the lieutenant was not ignorant of the fact of his rival's proximity. Melicent informed him of the illness and gradual decay of her mother—the unremitted visits and kind attentions of Mr. D——; the conduct of their neighbours, and her consequent lonely situation. Ezekiel heard it with deep regret, and their meeting, though gratifying to their mutual love, was one of melancholy feeling.

"Melicent," said Hopkins, "the lieutenant's command is ended—the schooner will never quit yon bank till the wild waves of the ocean carry the shattered

hull into deeper water. I shudder to think, my love, what your situation must be if deprived of your only parent and I not at hand to protect you. Yet," added he, after a short pause, "what protection can *I* afford, who am myself an out-law, with the price of blood upon my head?"

"And who has done this, Ezekiel?" inquired she with assumed firmness, whilst every limb shook with terror.

"It is the lieutenant's doing," returned he sorrowfully; "but it is part of his duty, and I can only blame him for hunting me down with a ferocity that is inconsistent with the conduct of one who professes to be a christian—yet here is his excuse, Melicent," added he, taking her hand between his own; "and truly it is one of surpassing power."

"I am yours, Ezekiel, and yours only," said Melicent, as she bowed her head upon his shoulder. "I am ready to share your dangers and become your wife; but cannot quit my mother whilst life remains."

"Nor would I wish you, dearest—nor is it requisite," returned he: "let but the minister of the holy word unite us; I shall then be certain, that as my wedded wife, you will have such protection thrown around you as will at all times be a strong defence from danger." He added, proudly, "I am not rich, Melicent, nor am I destitute—hush—" whispered he, "there is the noise of oars and—and perhaps I am betrayed." He put a silver whistle to his lips, and blew

it loud and shrill, but no answer was returned. "Melicent," said he, "let me see you in safety to the cottage; those are my enemies—it is a man-of-war's boat, and pulling this way."

"You're right for once," exclaimed a figure that became dimly visible near the projecting point, as Ezekiel and his fair companion advanced. "You pass not this way."

"And by what authority do you dare obstruct the passage?" demanded Hopkins.

"By the orders of my commander," answered the man. "Gaspars, ahoy!" he shouted, and was immediately responded to, "Here away, my boys—here away."

"Melicent," whispered Ezekiel, "with these brave men you are safe—they are only executing their duty. But I must away—fear not for *me*. If I delay, we may never meet again, and if I depart, a few hours hence you shall see me a triumphant man, and then——" the boat's bows grated on the beach, he pressed her once more to his heart. "Advance boldly to meet them," whispered he, and quitting her side, she saw him ascend the craggy face of the rock as the schooner's people joined their shipmate—she heard a heavy splash in the water—a shriek escaped her as the seamen gathered round—"He is drowned," said she, "he is lost!—for the love of heaven, save him!"

"Escaped again, by all that's unlucky!" said the man who assumed the office of superior: "away to the

boat, men! away! and lady, you'll please haul your wind along with us; for the skipper's orders was to bring aboard every body I could find at the cove."

"At your peril remove me!" exclaimed Melicent; "your commander has no right to deprive me of my liberty; nor will I go."

"No use talking, my lady," said the man, "obey orders; if you break owners, that's my way. Do your duty, you lubbers, and do it gently, or mayhap you may see how many tails the cat has got, although the pennant is little more than half-mast."

In a moment Melicent was raised from the ground in the arms of a couple of sturdy seamen, and hurried into the boat—the sound of oars was heard,—"Stretch out, my men!" shouted the coxswain; and the crew bent to the bold and nervous stroke. A small object was seen ahead—there was the luminous track of a boat, and the occasional sparkling of the broken water caused by rowing. "Give way, lads—stretch out together," roared the coxswain again, "we shall have them yet!"

Boldly and swiftly was the schooner's boat propelled through the yielding element,—they were close to the shore, and in a few minutes got alongside the tiny chace, but she floated alone—her oars were gone, and Melicent recognised the little shell from which Ezekiel had landed at the cove. Vexed and disappointed, the coxswain quitted the punt and pulled off to the schooner, now fearfully heeling over from the falling of the tide, and all hands were employed in getting

out shores and preventatives against her going lower. The lieutenant had been fully aware that Hopkins commanded the cutter, and when the latter escaped, through the wily stratagem he had practised, Mr. D—— suspected that he would make a visit to the cove. Now he could not quit the schooner himself, so he despatched his coxswain to bring on board all whom he should find upon the spot. The night was dark, and the coxswain had landed to search for the place, and thus Ezekiel was enabled again to effect his escape.

The meeting between Melicent and Mr. D—— was not of the most conciliatory nature. It is true, the latter never departed from his usual respectful demeanour, but circumstances had soured his temper, and the failure of the coxswain offered no emollient; he had not, however, intended that the lady should be seized, but, in the hurry of the moment, he had delivered his orders loosely, and the seaman had obeyed them literally. From the condition the schooner was in, she afforded no asylum to Melicent, nor could the lieutenant again spare the boat to land her; besides, his mind was more easy on her account whilst she was with him, and he knew his rival could not approach her. He felt confident if the weather kept moderate, of floating his vessel on the return of the tide, and thus it would only amount to a little inconvenience to her after all, and the alarm of her mother might soon be allayed by the knowledge of her daughter's safety. Melicent argued differently;—she well knew the feeble state her mother

was in, and she trembled for the consequences, but there was no alternative. The fate of Ezekiel, too, weighed heavy on her heart, though she cherished a hope that the mysterious words he had uttered referred to their soon meeting again.

About midnight the tide was at its lowest, and the schooner, with all her top-hamper down, and herself shored up with spars, lay nearly high and dry. A couch had been made on deck for Melicent, on which she vainly endeavoured to find repose. The lieutenant seated himself near her, and tried to soothe her mind; the seamen lay in groups wherever they could find a resting place, and, in another hour, the rising water was heard washing against the vessel's bottom. The anxiety of Mr. D—— began to subside, and he was not without expectations that efforts would be made from the shore to assist him in his perilous situation. Four bells (two o'clock) of the middle watch had just been struck, when the man stationed on the look-out forward, hailed "Boat, ahoy!" but no answer was returned. "Boat, ahoy!" repeated he, and then a voice was heard inquiring, "Do you want help?" "Ay, ay!" shouted the lieutenant, "but you cannot get along side yet—my small anchor is laid out, but I've no boat large enough to carry my bower, and we shall want a good purchase to heave us off this confounded bank."

"You will, indeed," solemnly uttered a voice that thrilled upon Melicent's ear in the silence of the night: —she knew it well—it was the voice of Ezekiel Hop-

kins. "What could he want?" rushed upon her mind; and then the words he had uttered at the cove—"the lieutenant's command is ended—the schooner will never quit yon bank," came like a prophetic warning of she knew not what. But the mystery was soon solved by the simultaneous appearance of a number of boats; and, in a moment, before any preparations for defence could be made, the schooner was boarded in all directions by armed men, who carried every thing before them. The lieutenant grasped a hand-spike and knocked down the first man who approached, but was himself levelled by the blow of a sabre; and, whilst on the deck, several of the assailants gathered round him, each threatening his life. "He has made many a poor fellow swing!" exclaimed one; "let's make a running bow-line in the squaresail out-hauler, and hang him up like a cod-fish to dry."

"Tow him ashore upon a grating," said another; "the devil 'll save his own though you turn him adrift in a sieve."

"Shove him down in the hold," cried a third, "and let him perish with his craft. Thus be they smitten who fight against the Lord."

"Wretch!" uttered a fourth, striking him with his half pike; "you have brought me and mine to ruin—my wife expired of a broken heart, and the offspring of my loins are vagabonds and wanderers."

"I have done no more than my duty," said the schooner's commander firmly; "and would do it again were it yet to be done."

"Away with him—away with him!" was now the simultaneous shout; "let him die the death!" and the lieutenant felt his arms firmly pinioned by a piece of stout cord, whilst a running noose was placed around his neck. "Kneel, sir, and pray," urged the third man who had spoken; "your time is but short, yet there is mercy at the eleventh hour to those who believe." To gain time the lieutenant kneeled, and his assailants stood over him with their heads uncovered, fanatically repeating texts of scripture whilst meditating a deed of blood.

Hopkins, the leader of the party, had insisted, previously to boarding, that, after the crew of the schooner had been secured, they should suffer no further molestation than the loss of freedom. He, himself, had been busily engaged in getting Melicent into one of the boats, and placing combustibles in the schooner's 'tween decks. The Gaspar's people were ordered to get their beds and things on deck ready for departure, and some time elapsed before he went aft; for, notwithstanding what he deemed his injuries, he felt a delicacy in insulting the lieutenant by his presence. But, observing a gang assembled, apparently doing nothing, he hastened to the spot to chide them.

"Are your prayers for mercy ended?" inquired the fanatic, who had desired the lieutenant to pray. "Come, sir, you shall not writhe in torture—man the whip, men—I will put a bullet through your heart, as they sway aloft."

"How?—what is this?" exclaimed Ezekiel, as he

rushed in amongst them. "Are ye men or devils? Put up your pistol, Henderson!—would you commit murder?" and with his own hands he cast off the noose from the lieutenant's neck. "Stand back, I say," for the fanatics crowded on him to stay his purpose. "Now, by yon star-lit heaven, I swear, the first who lays a finger on this officer, shall meet the fate you purposed for him." The men slowly and reluctantly retired. "Jasper," said he, to a young man who advanced, "have an eye upon those fellows—they think of nothing but blood. Let the people get their duds in readiness, and bear a-hand. Mr. D——," he continued, turning to the officer, "you see, sir, we have met again, and, though you have sought my life, and would have sacrificed it, I thank my God that I have been instrumental in saving yours. Direct your servants to hand up your clothes, or any property you may wish to save, for another hour will see this schooner burned down to the water's edge."

"You have performed a noble act, young man," said the lieutenant, "and I am grateful for it; nor can I prove my gratitude better than by earnestly and solemnly entreating you to withdraw these wilful and mistaken men, and return to your allegiance to your sovereign."

"You probably mean well, sir," returned Hopkins, "but it is an idle waste of breath. I give you, sir, one quarter of an hour to prepare for departure; by

that time ——," he checked himself, and left the officer to his own discretion.

At the expiration of the allotted period, the schooner's men were ordered into their boats—the combustibles were fired—the smoke and flame came pouring up the hatchways—the boats shoved off—and, in another quarter of an hour, the raging element enveloped the schooner in one large and continuous mass of fire. Ezekiel and his select friends landed at the cove, and accompanied Melicent to the cottage. They found the neighbourhood aroused by the flames; and fearfully gleamed the red blaze on the smooth surface of the dark waters, till one sudden explosion tossed the burning fragments into the air, and then all settled into obscurity and gloom. The inmates of the cottage were in unutterable distress—the disappearance of her daughter had distracted Mrs. Hargood—her protracted absence increased the malady under which she was labouring, and nature was making its last struggle when the party arrived. She lived but to know her child, to stretch forth her feeble hands to dispense the unheard blessing, and closed her eyes for ever.

Sad was the shock to the daughter of her affections, and Ezekiel knew well that immediate consolation under such a bereavement was impossible. He, however, had a short interview with Melicent, and, having consigned her to the care of a respectable widow lady who resided in the neighbourhood, he hastened away to join his comrades. The burning of the schooner

was considered so daring an act, that government offered a reward of five hundred pounds for the discovery and conviction of those engaged in it; but though many of them were known, and publicly walked the streets of Providence, no one could be found to give evidence against them. The lieutenant was severely wounded, and underwent a protracted confinement, but ultimately recovered. As soon as a decent interval had elapsed, Hopkins (who had given up his West India voyage) was united to Melicent, and the cottage continued to be her home, though it was but seldom, and then in secret, that her husband could share it with her.

Affairs grew worse and worse between the colonies and the parent country. The land-forces were increased, large naval armaments spread along the coasts, and commerce was so restricted, especially in the province of Massachussets, that the merchants beheld the advance of ruin, which they felt it impossible to check or to avoid. The unlading of the tea-ships, and the destruction of their cargoes, to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, in the port of Boston (in which Hopkins took a leading part, the assailants being disguised as Mohawk Indians), brought down heavier vengeance on that town; so that the lading or unlading of any goods or merchandise, except stores for his majesty's service, was entirely prohibited, and several ships of the line arrived to enforce the prohibition.

"We have no alternative, Jasper," said Ezekiel to

the young man, who has been already introduced in the attack upon the schooner; "the seamen are fast quitting the port, for they will not starve. Wretchedness to those we love is engraven on the scroll of our destiny—we have no alternative. What say you, then, if we make out our own commissions, and hoist our own flag?"

"Your course is mine," returned Jasper. "I wish to steer by no other than the compass in your binnacle. We have been shipmates and messmates from boyhood, and I am ready to hold on by you to the last."

"It shall be so," exclaimed his companion. "These Englishers shall not have it all their own way upon the ocean—there shall be AN AVENGER afloat upon the deep; and though they may call us pirates, what is there in a name? Come, Jasper, my boy, your hand upon it—let us draw for superiority of station."

"That is utterly needless," replied Jasper; "since I readily yield it to *you*, who are so much better calculated to undertake it. Let me be, as I have hitherto been, your second—'tis all I ask."

"Agreed, my old Bostonian," said Hopkins, cheerfully; "and first for Melicent, and then ——." He made a motion with his hand to his neck, and the friends parted.

A few months subsequent to this, orders were issued to the different men-of-war upon the station, directing that a strict look-out should be kept for a remarkably fine flush-deck ship, that had fitted out at Nantucket as a whaler, but had secretly taken in arms and ammunition to cruise as a pirate. She mounted eighteen long

brass twelve-pounders, with a long thirty-two pounder a-midship, on a traversing carriage; was well supplied with whale-boats, and had a crew of one hundred and forty men, principally belonging to Boston, Providence, and Nantucket. She was a remarkably fast sailer, and had already committed several acts of aggression against the cruisers in the service of his majesty—in fact, for speed and daring, nothing could surpass the FIERCE AVENGER: even her colours gave indications of her character, as they showed bloody stripes upon a white field. Accounts from the Gulf of Florida teemed with the desperate acts of the marauders. British ships, both outward and homeward bound, were plundered, but personal property was respected, and cruelty was never shown. The strength of the vessel's armament precluded the possibility of defence by those whom she encountered, so that it was but seldom attempted; and when an action did commence, the superiority was soon decided in favour of the rover. The small vessels of war were well aware of the hopeless nature of a contest, and, though the officers would gladly have perilled a battle, even with great odds, they knew how useless it was to sacrifice the lives of their men without obtaining the slightest advantage to compensate for such a loss. Frigates and sloops had tried to catch her, but she outsailed them all, and the clear judgment and admirable seamanship of her commander had rescued her in many a difficult strait, when capture seemed all but certain. All at once she was missed from the station,

and some vessels homeward bound gave intelligence that they had been boarded by her off the Western Islands; other arrivals had been plundered near the Straits of Gibraltar, and, at last, a ship, richly laden and well armed, had fought a long engagement with the piratical corvette, off the Scilly Isles,—was compelled to strike, and the most valuable part of her cargo was taken out; when a frigate had hove in sight, and the pirate made sail to the westward.

Great alarm prevailed amongst the merchants, and anxious inquiries were constantly made at the seaports, under a hope that some of the British cruisers would fall in with and take her; but no information was obtained of her proceedings for several months, till the news was communicated that a ship answering her description had been seen off Cape Cod, where she had boarded a government transport, and amply supplied herself with ammunition and stores. The cruisers were immediately on the alert; two frigates sailed from Boston to look for the outlaw, but no tidings could be gained of him beyond his having been seen off Nantucket, and even as far in the bight as Martha's Vineyard; but nothing further was known, as it did not appear that he had held any communication with the shore, and, as he stood out to sea under a press of canvass, it was conjectured that he had proceeded on another cruise.

Melicent Hopkins had remained at the cottage respected and beloved by her neighbours, who now looked upon her as one of themselves. She had given

birth to a fine boy, whose resemblance to his father she loved to contemplate as a source of never-ending gratification—but with it came a woman's fears for a husband's safety. She knew the perilous occupation in which he was engaged, and sickly apprehension would oftentimes sadden the pleasure of witnessing the innocent and infantile tricks of her smiling boy. Report had, from time to time, spread information of Ezekiel's "whereabouts." Mr. Hancock, of Boston, had repeatedly communicated all the intelligence he could glean (no small stock, by the way, as he was deeply engaged in the scheme which Hopkins had planned, and was executing), and she cherished the hope that brighter, happier days would yet dawn upon them. Terror would sometimes agitate and distress her when she thought of her husband's danger, and the large reward (fifteen hundred pounds) that was offered for his apprehension.

Melicent was sitting in her little parlour nursing her sleeping infant. The lamp shed forth its shining light—the curtains at the windows were drawn, when a neighbour called in to say that her husband had just arrived from Boston, and brought intelligence that the fierce pirate "The Avenger," was on the coast. Melicent trembled in every limb—she laid her boy in his wicker dormitory, whilst agitation forced the perspiration from every pore. She struggled to be tranquil, but the mingled feelings of hope and dread overpowered her, and she sank to the earth. The kind neighbour raised her up—a flood of tears brought

relief, her mind grew strengthened, and she was enabled to assume a calmness which she did not feel. Midnight came; all in the house, except Melicent, were wrapt in profound repose—she still sat in her parlour, alternately cherishing sweet expectations, and then again yielding to despondency. A tap was heard at the window—her heart beat quick—the tap was repeated, and emotion fixed her to her seat. She heard her name called gently: the voice was his,—the very voice that had been treasured in memory since last she heard its sound. Her spirits revived—her strength returned—she opened the door, and was clasped in her husband's arms. Oh, who can paint the ecstasy of that delightful moment?

They sat together in that little parlour, and fondly did the parent caress his crowing offspring. Jewels, rare and costly, were spread before his devoted wife, who, however, felt that her pearl of best price was the affection of her husband. Heaps of gold were released from various parts of his person, and he threw over her shoulders a beautiful mantilla from India, bordered with flowers, that seemed to have all the freshness of life. But Melicent, though gratified by such proofs of remembrance, still preferred the white scarf which Ezekiel had ever retained, and, on all especial occasions, had worn about his neck. Two days,—two short but happy days,—they passed together, and the following morning he was again to take his departure. The hour arrived—they were standing in the little garden fronting the cottage. Melicent had

decorated herself in some of the ornaments she had received from Ezekiel's hand. The mantilla was brooched upon her bosom with a costly diamond, and even the neck of the infant displayed a precious gift. They said but little. Ezekiel plucked a full-blown rose, and placed it in her hair, and whilst lingering still to lengthen the adieu, he saw the little cutter of his former exploits anchor in the bay. A crowd of recollections rushed upon his mind; he pressed her to his heart, and was bidding her farewell, when a party of armed seamen entered the garden, and, before he could conceal himself or escape, he was a prisoner. Without allowing him a moment's delay, he was hurried to the beach, where a small boat lay in readiness. His hands were heavily ironed, and he was thrown in without one spark of commiseration being excited at his unhappy condition.

Melicent's heart was nearly broken; she retired to her apartment, where the first thing she saw was the white scarf, and as she looked from the window, she placed it in sight, that her husband might know her eyes were still upon him. The rose fell from her hair in the recess where it remained, and taking her sleeping boy in her arms, she sat herself down to weep. Oh, scalding, scalding, were those tears, and bitter, bitter, was her agony! She saw the boat pull to the little cutter—this was inexplicable. She saw the cutter stand out to sea—animation seemed almost suspended, when several of the neighbours arrived to comfort the afflicted. But the circumstances which had occurred,

drew down upon her head the vengeance of the authorities. Her person was seized, and, with her child, she was consigned to the interior of a jail, whence she was conveyed to Boston, and kept in strict durance; not a friend, male or female, being allowed to visit her. Thus dragged on the dreary months of her existence, till, wasted with confinement and worn by anxiety, she seemed but a shadow of her former self. Of her husband she heard nothing, for the subject was prohibited, and her only solace in affliction was his semblance in her darling boy.

When Ezekiel was lifted on board his own vessel, the cutter, the first person that presented himself was his former opponent, the lieutenant, (now elevated to the rank of commander,) who had, on hearing of the visitor on the coast, rightly judged that Ezekiel would seek an opportunity to snatch a few hasty hours with his wife. He communicated his thoughts to the commander-in-chief, and seizing the cutter, he manned her with some of his own seamen, and, sailing from Boston, brought his plans to the fruition that has been shown.

"Well met again, young man!" said he, as with ill-repressed delight he contemplated the success of his stratagem; "we are once more upon the same deck—you stopped my *promotion* once. I fear I shall not be able to do the same for you."

Ezekiel's heart was too full to say much. He gave the captain a look of utter contempt. "The hemp's not spun that is to do that office for *me*," returned he;

"nor is it manly to taunt the vanquished—I had hoped better things from *you*."

"Come, come, don't be testy, young man," said Captain D——; "you cannot suppose that I have forgotten or forgiven the destruction of my schooner; in truth, it was a villanous affair; and now, with one thousand five hundred pounds reward!—Hopkins, the temptation was too great. I have you safe now, where no 'Avenger' can deliver you."

"Tut, man! I set you at defiance!" vociferated Hopkins; "and, if your revengeful passions want stimulating, remember I deprived you of a wife as well as a schooner;" and he laughed in derision.

The captain bit his lips, and his flushed cheeks told how well the blow had struck. "We'll talk of this when we reach Boston. Take him below, men."

Ezekiel was thrust into the hold, where, galled by his manacles, he lay in utter darkness, and almost suffocated with the heat. Hours passed on in miserable anticipation, and keen reflection, till, by the motion of the vessel, he became sensible that the breeze had stiffly freshened, and the noise on deck convinced him that they were shortening sail. Sea after sea broke over the lively little craft, and the water came pouring down upon the unhappy prisoner. The gale increased from the north-west, and, as they opened out clear of the land, the sea ran fearfully high, and the cutter was just going about to stand in shore again; but, in accomplishing this, she pitched so heavily forward, that her bowsprit broke short off at the stem, and they

were compelled to lay her to under the try-sail. Nothing could behave better than the light buoyant vessel, as she rolled over the billows, like a gull topping the comb of a wave:—wet she was, it is true, but she safely swam where many a larger vessel must have perished. Hopkins was, at length, released from his unpleasant confinement, and suffered to remain on deck. All night the gale continued, but lulled towards the morning; the sea gradually went down, and, at day-light, the wind had greatly abated, and the water was, comparatively, smooth; but close to them, emerging from the haze of early dawn, appeared a large ship, evidently a vessel of war.

"It is the Rose," said Captain D——; "she's looking for a Yankee pirate that has lately been seen upon the coast," and he sternly fixed his eyes on Hopkins; "she sees us, and is bearing down."

Ezekiel gazed stealthily, but with intense anxiety, at the stranger—he drew a convulsive respiration—his lip quivered with emotion, and a livid paleness overspread his face; it was, however, but momentary, and passed unnoticed; his blood rallied, and rushed violently to his head,—he made a desperate effort, and was calm.

The ship rapidly approached, nearly end on; they had no glass on board the cutter, but one of the seamen respectfully approached his commander, and uncovering a venerable head, exclaimed, "Mayhap your honour will excuse my troubling on you in regard o' the sloop; but I thought it a bit of my duty, your

honour, just to tell you that that 'ere ship arn't his majesty's sloop Rose, whatever other name she may be entered by in the Navy List."

"Not the Rose?" returned the captain, starting up in haste; "pooh—pooh, old man—it must be either the Rose or the Lively,—what other king's ship should we fall in with here?"

"It may be the Lively, your honour, thof I misdoubts it," ejaculated the seaman, stroking his silken locks over his forehead; "but every man will be as wise as his neighbour presently, I'm thinking."

"What do you mean, Jackson?" inquired the commander, quickly, as a vague answer to his own question crossed his thoughts. "What ship do you think it is?"

"Why then, since your honour axes me," answered the man, "and Bill never was the boy to shove his oar in another man's rullock—since your honour axes me, I'm bound to speak my mind, and I'm blessed if I don't believe she's that pirate as they've overhauled so much palaver about lately."

"Impossible, Jackson!" exclaimed Captain D——, again fixing his eyes on Hopkins, who stood the severe scrutiny undisturbed; then, addressing him, he said, "Are you acquainted with yon ship, young man?"

"You put a difficult question, sir," replied Ezekiel, with assumed indifference. "Even you yourself are unable to distinguish friend from foe without a glass; but less than half-an-hour will decide it, according to the rattling rate the vessel travels."

"You know her rate, then?" rejoined the captain, as he keenly watched the other's countenance.

"Does a seaman require the log to be hove to know how long, in such a breeze as this, a craft may run three or four miles?" said Hopkins, evasively; "King George's hounds are none of the slowest when they sniff the wind."

"You are pleased to be facetious, sir," exclaimed the captain, indignantly; "perhaps your neck may be a little ticklish yet, before I've done with you."

"For shame! Mr. D——," returned Hopkins, proudly; "what, show petulance, and employ threats to a man so utterly in your power? An armed crew around me, and a British man-of-war bearing down! Reflect, sir, or your people will ridicule you for your indiscretion."

The captain felt the full force of the rebuke, and the manner in which it was uttered satisfied him that Hopkins was ignorant of the character of the stranger. The men, (most of them employed in running out a jury-bowsprit,) looked with "lack-lustre" eye as the gallant bark drew nigher; and they murmured amongst themselves as indecisive how to act. "Bear a-hand, lads,—get sail upon the cutter," shouted the captain; "we can yet hold our own."

But the order was too late—the stranger neared them too fast to encourage any hope of their getting away, if such was the captain's intent; the men, however, went cheerily to work—the jib and gaff top-sail were set, and the pretty little craft danced along as if in

joyous pride that she had braved the gale. On came the ship, ploughing the foaming element, that roared beneath her forefoot, and—"What do you make of her now, Jackson?" asked the captain.

"She's telling your honour herself," replied Jackson, as the smoke of her bow gun curled up before the foresail, and a large red-striped ensign floated from the gaff end.

"By Heaven, it is the infernal pirate!" uttered the captain, as the shot dashed up the spray upon the cutter's deck. "Hopkins, you know her now!"

"I do, sir," returned Hopkins, stiffly; and, holding up his fettered hands, added, "These irons will tell but a sorry tale, Mr. D——; I would recommend their speedy removal—for the 'Avengers' are but men—some of them lawless, and difficult to command; it is for you I speak, and not for myself."

The captain was touched with the nobleness of the proposition, but his consent would, he feared, have something of a look of cowardice, and therefore he remained silent. Not so, Jackson—an old stager; he quickly released the prisoner's hands, so that when the ship ran alongside, and hove-to, he was free. Scarcely an individual was to be seen on the Avenger's deck. A young man, in a light undress uniform, stood at the gangway, with a trumpet in his hand, which he was about to use, when Hopkins's voice arrested his intention. "Jasper," exclaimed he, from the cutter's quarter, "send me the boat." The young man waved his cap with a "Ay, ay, sir;" and first

a few heads were raised above the bulwarks—a whisper ran along—"It is the captain—it is the captain!" and simultaneously up sprang the whole crew, with a loud and hearty cheer to welcome Ezekiel's return.

The boat with Hopkins and Captain D—— was soon at the Avenger's gangway, and they ascended to the deck. The seamen expressed their warm congratulations—the officers gathered round them, and though surprised at seeing a British naval commander, they respectfully saluted him, and extended their hands to Hopkins. Discipline was, for the moment, forgotten, and, as Captain D—— was well known to several of the seamen, he observed many scowling looks bent upon him. Ezekiel addressed a few words to Jasper, and then went below. Jasper communicated with his subordinates, who also disappeared, and he himself followed the example, leaving the gunner in charge of the deck. The boat had again boarded the cutter, and one or two of the seamen, with whom Captain D—— was no favourite, mentioned the treatment which Hopkins had received. This, on their return, was diffused amongst the Avenger's people, and it became evident, by their menacing attitudes and looks, that they meditated a terrible retaliation. Numbers of them, under pretence of examining the guns, got clustering on the quarter-deck, and Captain D—— became aware that they gazed upon him with an evil eye. Nevertheless he paced to-and-fro, with firm steps, and unchanged mien, as if daring them to do their worst.

Hopkins again appeared on deck, closely enveloped in a boat-cloak, and the men immediately came aft in a body, demanding the "due execution of their laws."

"Why, how now!" exclaimed Ezekiel; "of what have you to complain? I left you a satisfied and contented people but one short week since—what means this demonstration?"

"An eye for an eye—and a tooth for a tooth," uttered an old Bostonian; "the marks of the darbies are not yet off your wrists—we are the Avengers, and as it has been meted out, so shall we measure it again."

"What do you require?" said Hopkins, now fully aware, that they had been made acquainted with his confinement.

"Punishment for yon proud officer," answered the Bostonian. Captain D—— curled his lip with contempt, and gave them a glance of defiance, as he continued his walk.

"It was a personal offence," said Ezekiel, as his breast glowed with satisfaction at witnessing this testimony of attachment from his men; "you have no right to interfere in it."

"Captain Hopkins, change places wi' me," uttered the Bostonian in a tone of argument; "we are bound together by one cord, as one man, and he who hurts a member inflicts injury upon the whole body. What say you, shipmates?"

A shout was the response, which brought a pallid

hue upon the cheek of the British officer; but it vanished in an instant, and his look was as haughty and as steady as before. Hopkins seemed for a minute or two puzzled, when Jasper made his appearance, likewise closely muffled up. "Boatswain," shouted Hopkins, "send every soul aft!" then lowering his voice, he uttered to those around him, "My men, be what you have ever been, true to your country and to me—the day of justice has arrived." There was another shout, and, the boatswain having reported every one on deck, Hopkins ascended the skylight. "Avengers," said he, "these hands were the first to hoist yon colours at the peak—this arm was amongst the foremost that struck for freedom on the sea. Blood has been shed on shore—our countrymen and the royalists are at open war—we are no longer pirates, but bear the commission of Congress as a continental cruizer, and it has pleased them to reward my humble services with the rank of commodore." He threw off his cloak, and appeared in a handsome uniform, with epaulettes, not much dissimilar to the dress worn by post-captains in the British navy; whilst Jasper also disencumbered himself of disguise, and came forth as a lieutenant. A wave from the commodore's hand brought the other officers into view, each clothed in his proper costume of lieutenant or midshipman.

Captain D—— looked on in amazement; — he knew that a conflict had taken place at Lexington, and that Congress was endeavouring to organise an army; and

now he saw a bold attempt to meet the English on their own element. As soon as the surprise of the Avengers had somewhat ceased, the commodore explained to them the situation in which they would be placed by the change, and offered any of them permission to take the little cutter, with their share of prize-wealth, so that they might return to their homes. This every one declined. He then represented to them, that, having become a national vessel, they must treat all who were captured as prisoners of war; but not being able at that moment to spare Captain D—— from the ship, he, as well as his men, must put up with the inconvenience of a cruise. As for the cutter, a little labour would make her a pretty tender, and, with sixteen men, and an officer, four small guns and fire-arms, she should hoist the blood-red stripes. After a few minutes' deliberation, the proposal of the commodore was agreed to. He read them his commission and the commissions of his officers, which were received with loud cheers as his swallow-tailed symbol of rank was run up to the mast-head. The cutter was manned with volunteers, and her ensign and pennant, as a continental cruizer, flaunted in the breeze. The vessels filled and stretched out to sea, and when at a convenient distance, they bore up for the gulf of Florida to intercept the West India trade.

Hostilities between the colonists and the royal army commenced in earnest—the southern states, which had at first remained inactive, now cordially joined the federal union; but though they had possessed them-

selves of arms, they were in many instances destitute of ammunition. At Charlestown this was particularly the case, but, in a port of East Florida, Hopkins captured an English transport with 15,000 lbs. of gunpowder. This achievement was gallantly performed by the boats of the Avenger, and the powder was speedily transferred to the colonial magazine at Charlestown. It would be impossible to detail any of the actions in which Hopkins was engaged for several months, during which he was collecting together a formidable squadron, so that the commencement of 1776 saw him commodore over twelve or fourteen armed ships, carrying from eighteen to thirty-two guns each, besides numerous schooners and cutters. He obtained fame and honour amongst the colonists, whilst his unfortunate wife, though not rigorously treated, was immured within the jail of Boston. The 17th of March arrived; Lord Howe found his position no longer tenable—humanity urged him to embark his troops—the colonial force took possession of the town and its defences—the men-of-war sailed out of the bay—Melicent was restored to liberty—and, with her smiling boy, was conducted to the government-house amidst the applauding shouts of assembled thousands—no longer the imprisoned bride of an out-lawed pirate, but the honoured wife of the commodore of the infant Colonial Navy. A few days subsequent to this, a beautiful ship entered the bay and brought up off the town—the red-striped ensign floated at her peak, and the swallow-tailed budgee appeared at the

main. A salute of twenty-one guns was fired, and answered from the forts. A deputation from the authorities waited upon the commodore, to congratulate him on his success. He landed from the state-barge amidst the plaudits of the whole town, and, as he passed through the streets, those plaudits were reiterated; whilst, from the windows the flourishing of handkerchiefs and the smiles of lovely faces welcomed his arrival. He approached the government-house—a female with a child in her arms was standing in the balcony—she wore an India mantilla, brooched on the bosom with a diamond—a white scarf was in her hand, which she kept waving with energetic delight—it was Melicent and her boy, and, in a few minutes more, they were clasped in the embrace of Ezekiel Hopkins —the commander of the AVENGER.

A DEFINITIVE ANSWER.

"Marriage!" quoth Kate; "define it, if you can, sir:"—
"The bachelor's last folly," was the answer.

H.

THE PRISON-BORN.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PROVOST OF BRUGES."

The sun has sunk behind the distant hill,
And the world's busy hum grows faint and still;
The o'erwrought peasant hails the long day's close,
And hastens to his dreamless night's repose;
The bird flies homeward to her distant nest,
And, with faint twitterings, bids her young ones rest;
The sick man views the failing day grow dim,
And marvels if 'twill shine again for him;
The captive waits impatient for its end,
To seek, in sleep, his last remaining friend,
Forget his chains, and, for a moment, free,
Dream of the hills, of home, and liberty.

The sun has set — and his last sickly beam
Poured, through a dungeon's bars, a broken gleam
Upon a captive. — In that haggard face
Few would the young, the proud St. Amand trace; —
St. Amand, once the gayest of the throng
That fortune's glittering current bore along;

* The incidents on which this tale is founded are strictly true.

The blest in love, in fortune, friends, and power,
The famed, the honoured — 'till, in evil hour,
He dared to think a minister could err,
And scorned to be a despot's worshipper; —
Then, in an instant, by that iron sway,
Fame, honors, fortune, — all were swept away.
Swift fell the bolt — for tyranny accords,
To doubting minds, few arguments of words;
Chains can more quickly bend the stubborn will,
And shackles bid the prating tongue be still.
The dungeon now is young St. Amand's lot,
His fate, — almost his very name forgot;
While weary months their course uncounted roll,
And waste his body, and consume his soul.
Yet is he not alone — for by him sits
A being, gentle as the form that flits
Before the poet's gaze, when, from the sky,
He draws down beauty earth could ne'er supply.
What does she here? — Is it a vision sent
To soothe the hours of his imprisonment?
An angel come to break the chains that gall
His fettered limbs, and bid the shackles fall?
No! — 'tis his wife, his own, his cherished bride,
Whose constant truth clings ever to his side;
A voluntary captive! — Love can bind
Faster than chains; — the heartstrings, once entwined,
Like autumn tendrils, in the keen blast taking
A firmer hold, will only loose with breaking.
His was her heart, and his its plighted truth
When fortune smiled bright as their opening youth:

The altar heard and sanctified the vow,
And in the prison vault she keeps it now:
Incense and blazing tapers heard it made,—
Darkness and prison glooms behold it paid.

Yet *she* is changed of late. — For months gone by
Hope was in all her words, joy in her eye;
And she would oft beguile him of his wo,
'Till his heart warmed with all its early glow.
But now *her* spirit sinks — nor can she stay
The silent tear on its unbidden way;
And while her hand is placed in his, its grasp
Has mingled love and sadness in its clasp:
And both are silent, — save that wordless speech
That vibrates thrilling on the heart of each.
And this is in the hour that ought to prove
Life's fondest to the hearts of those who love;
The harbinger of that when each shall claim,
For the first time, a parent's thrilling name.

The night is ended — and refreshed and gay
Nature awakens with the opening day;
Hope hails the reign of light again begun,
And life laughs jocund in the rising sun!
The night is ended — but what tongue shall tell
The hours of darkness in St. Amand's cell?
All, all, is changed — life that was not before,
And where it *had* been warmest, — life no more!
Care sits no longer on that smooth pale brow;
The prest hand yields no answering pressure now;

The eye's bright mirror, dimmed, no longer gives,
Reflected back, the look that it receives ;
The gentle voice is mute, the warm heart chill,
Life's struggling hour is past, and all is still!

And he, the desolate,—oh! lives he yet,
To curse the life in him so strongly knit,
That grief's worst agony will only shake
And tear the heartstrings that it cannot break ?
His knotted brow hangs darkly o'er his eye,
Whose heavy look is fixed on vacancy ;
Stern, silent, motionless, he gathers there
His soul in the dead stillness of despair ;
And not a sound, save his deep breathing, gives
A token that the rigid statue lives.
But all within is chaos — a wild jar
Of thoughts and feelings in tumultuous war ;
All crowding in confusion, struggling through,
And each, in turn, displaced and crushed by new ;
'Till wearied sense and reason are nigh flown,
And madness all but mounts their vacant throne.

Just in that instant, rose a wailing cry,—
The voice of helpless, new-born infancy :
So strangely thrilling through that hour of gloom,
The voice of opening life rose o'er the tomb ;
It reached e'en his dull ear, — and, like the light
Of the first day, pierced the chaotic night ;
His startled heart beat quicker, and his eye
Turned on the babe in curious scrutiny ;

They placed it in his arms — and his thick breath
Came gasping like the strife 'twixt life and death;
Feeling revived — 'till, as he gazed, there burst
A long deep flood of precious tears — his first!
Oh, how the heart, parched with its burning pain,
Drank the soft drops of that refreshing rain!
Another life seemed opened — a new sense —
A mine of wealth in his deep indigence;
While, as he o'er the unconscious infant hung,
His bleeding heart with more than fondness clung;
'Till hope and grief alternate wore away
The lingering remnant of the mournful day;
And then, upon the widowed father's breast,
The Prison-born took his first night of rest.

Months slowly passed — and all the father's joy
Was to attend and gaze upon his boy:
And then to watch the quickening eye express,
In its faint smile, approaching consciousness;
And,—privilege of love so dearly prized!—
To see with pride the parent recognised;
The timid face turned from the stranger guest,
And nestling safely in the father's breast.
Extatic joy! 'Tis always sweet to trace
The first faint dawn of soul upon the face
Of opening childhood, and to watch the ray
Of intellect that brightens day by day;
To see the little arms, with infant grace,
Stretched out to meet the parent's fond embrace;

To see the eye, with life's first sorrows wet,
In that embrace its little griefs forget;
To hear the lips in their first freshness move,
Pouring their words of pure and untaught love;—
'Tis always sweet!—'Tis sweet where joys abound,
And pausing pleasure checks her giddy round,
To snatch the bliss,—or, where it mingling flows,
Relaxing labour, varying repose;—
But oh, how sweet, how purely, doubly bright,
When, like a single star, in sorrow's night
Alone it shines—no other beacon nigh,—
The only ray in all the blackened sky!

So grew the boy—and not unhealthy grew,
Though his cheek wanted childhood's ruddy hue;
For, though the prison damps could scarce invite
The flower to blossom, still they did not blight:
And his young mind, with but a keener edge,
Hungered for knowledge in that narrow cage,
Where, soon exhausted all he found within,
His restless fancy painted the unseen,
'Till all was wonderful;—and 'twould beguile
The imprisoned man of a forgotten smile,
Those strange imaginings.—Then, many a time,
Upon the ready shoulder, he would climb
To the high window whence he might look down
Upon the wonders of the busy town;
Describe each object, questioning of each
From the fond father, ever pleased to teach:

Or he would sit and listen, long hours through,
To legends of the past, for ever new;
While his bright eyes would flash or tears would flow,
As told the tale of valour or of wo;
'Till the proud parent caught him to his breast,
And wept for her those transports never blessed.
And then revived the craving to be free,
That other eyes his beauteous child might see;
Might know his wealth, and envy him the joy
To be the father of that prison-boy.

It comes at last. — His enemy no more
Has power to bar his steps; — the prison door
Flies open, and again the light of day
Pours on his shrinking eyes an unchecked ray.
Oh! who shall paint the rapture of delight
From all that meets the boy's unpractised sight;
While the fond father, with an equal zest,
Feels all his joy reflected in his breast?
Old loves revive — and now, from night to morn,
All crowd to gaze upon the prison-born,
To proffer new enjoyments, and to see
The strong effect of every novelty.
The banquet summons to its board to day, —
And who so quick the summons to obey?
To-morrow night the festive meeting calls, —
And who so late to quit the lighted halls?
Who each delight so ready to enjoy
In its first bloom, as the enfranchised boy?

But, though awhile excitement's sudden flush
Would make the crimson current mantling rush
Through his pale cheek,—still, the excitement o'er,
That cheek returned yet paler than before ;
His spirit failed, — a heavy languor stole
O'er his slight frame, and chilled his buoyant soul.
New joys must rouse the palling sense again ; —
New joys were tried to rouse it — but in vain ; —
The tender plant, nursed in a twilight gleam,
Withered and sank before a brighter beam.
" Nay, he is weary then," the father cried,
With a faint smile his trembling lip belied ;
" And I will nurse him," — but in vain he nursed ; —
Still drooping, fading, weakening, from the first ;
Until, at last, upon his weary bed
The languid limbs of the sick child were laid ;
And o'er him watched the never-sleeping eye
Of him whose love all labour could defy ;
Eager with hopes — for oh, for one so dear,
His trembling bosom would not, *dared* not fear ! —
He thought he slept, — and, as he listening hung,
Starting, the boy his arms around him flung ;
" Father," he cried, " dear father !" — and to his
He pressed his lips with a convulsive kiss ;
Then gently sank without a sigh or moan,
And once again St. Amand was alone !

He did not speak, nor move, nor rave, nor weep ;
But sat and gazed upon that quiet sleep,

With unblanched cheek, and fixed, unwinking eye ; —
His boy so beautiful — he could not die !
Oh no ! — and yet to see him move again,
Though racked with all the agony of pain,
Would now be rapture ! — Then his lips began
To frame unmeaning words, and, rambling, ran
On days of happiness ;— and then he smiled,
And promised pleasures to his darling child ;
And played his fingers through his silken hair,
And said his boy looked never half so fair ; —
Then kissed his brow, and started at its chill,
And marvelled what should cause that sudden thrill ;
Then chid him for his silence : — night and day
He spent unwearied in this ghastly play ;
Yet still was gentle — save when they would seek
To rob him of his treasure, — then would break
His frenzy into fierceness, while he twined
Around him with a strength none could unbind :
And so they left him — day succeeding day —
Until, at last, the fingers of decay
Began their leaden markings, and he saw,
Perplexed, and wondering with a childish awe,
The dark and livid brow and sunken cheek,
And all the lines of beauty grow more weak,
'Till all were gone ; — and then his sense grew dull :
He said, it was no more his beautiful,
And they might take it now. — And so they made
The fair boy's grave, not in the vault's damp shade,
But in the air, beneath heaven's canopy,
Decked with young flowers, not more fair than he.

And there you oft might see the restless man,
Pausing the curious novelty to scan,
And, with his shadowy finger, one by one,
Tracing the letters on the graven stone.
At length, one sunny morning, he was found
Stretched lifeless on that little flowery mound,
With a calm smile upon his lip, that seemed
As he had passed in peace;—you might have deemed
His own lost boy had called him to the sky,
And been himself his guide and company.

They lived together, and together lie;—
And many a mother, as she passes by
The spot where those fond ashes mingling rest,
Strains her own infant closer to her breast;
And pausing, breathes a prayer, by night and morn,
Over St. Amand and his Prison-born.

AN EPITAPH.

His Morn was full of promise — bright with flowers;
Noon's burning zenith saw him passion's slave;
With Eve came, health-fraught, penitence' late showers;
And Night fell chilly on a Christian's grave.

H.

THE WILD HUNTSMAN.

STAND, — whilst the storm rolls past! — Enormous
clouds
Come muttering up the sky; and the low wind
Wails, like a murdered ghost!—The wolves lie still:—
The jackall cries not: — the lone owl is dumb!
But the strong oaks shudder, and the solemn pines
Wave their dark hair, and, bending, whisper,—'Woe!'

Look, look! — who rideth, and rideth,
O'er river, — and hill, — and plain—
With the bright-eyed lightnings before him,
That shoot through the darkening rain?
He crashes the oaks of the forest!
He rendeth the veil of sleep!
And the Bacchanal Winds behind him
Come blowing their trumpets deep!

Hark, hark! — like a monarch, he crieth
"Ho! Ho!" to his night-black steed;
And each thing of the wilderness flieth,
Aghast, at its topmost speed!
Oh, swift comes the flood from the mountains,
When it scatters the raging drouth;
But the wild, wild hunter, — *he* cometh
Like the ball from the cannon's mouth!

He flies! — And what power can check him?
Not the king on his armed throne;
He driveth the storms before him!
He splitteth the strength of stone!
Yet, his dissonance falls like music
On the dreams of the innocent child;
And the spirit of Truth unarmed
Disarmeth the Huntsman wild!

C.

ON THE DEATH OF A GREAT ACTOR.

He dies,—he's dead! Now, farewell Grief, and Scorn!
Jealousy, Hatred, Love,—to each farewell!
Who yet hath told, or who shall *ever* tell
Again (like him that's dead) your tales forlorn? —
With every story, still he brought us good,—
Grave joys, sweet tears, a light that touched the heart,
Great thoughts that bade our own low cares depart,
And much not now confessed, nor understood.

We grieve. Dost *Thou* not grieve? Is thy bright way
Thronged with no ancient dreams? Or dost thou scorn
The world that prized thee? — No! Thy soul would mourn,
Shouldst thou — inquiring for things passed away —
Hear heavenly voices, in calm answer, say —
"*In other regions was that Passion born.*"

C.

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